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By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

EDITOR: H. D. A. MAJOR, D.D., F.S.A.

The Thirtieth Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen

PROBLEMS OF CHRISTIAN FAITH AND PRACTICE

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A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

Nos. 7—12 NOVEMBER Vol. XXXVII

MODERN CHURCHMEN'S CONFERENCE 1947

By the Editor

THE Thirtieth Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen was held under the hospitable roof of Westfield College, London, on September 22nd to 27th, 1947, under the Presidency of Sir Henry Self.

The theme of the Conference, 'Problems of Christian Faith and Practice,' produced papers more varied and practical in character than has been usual at many of our past Conferences. All the papers read at the Conference, together with the Presidential Address and the Conference Sermon, are published in this issue of the *Modern Churchman.*

Our Conference was dominated by a sense of foreboding created by the seriousness of the existing national economic situation, and by the ecclesiastical crisis produced by the publication of the Bishop of Birmingham's book *The Rise of Christianity.*

The relief of the economic situation is not primarily the duty of the Modern Churchmen's Union. In the case, however, of the ecclesiastical crisis a serious obligation rests on the Modern Churchmen's Union, as the rights of truth and freedom within the Church of England are seriously threatened by the attack made on Bishop Barnes by those who, although 'wishing well unto our Zion,' have chosen, so it seems to us, the wrong method of dealing with the situation created.

The Guardian of October 17th, reporting the Primate's address delivered to both Houses of the Canterbury Convocation in Joint Synod assembled, thus summarizes his Grace's criticism and condemnation of the Bishop of Birmingham's publication :

> 'Dr. Fisher then referred to the Bishop of Birmingham's recent boo entitled *The Rise of Christianity*. While recognizing the sincerity of th Bishop's attempt to harmonize different approaches to truth, and acknow ledging the central place which our Lord holds in his faith, Dr. Fishe said that the book presented a view of Christ and the Christian fait which had been weighed by scholars in the past, and was not accepte by the Church. What was offered in this book was not the faith of th New Testament and the Church, and was inconsistent with the Church' creeds and forms of worship. The Archbishop declared that such view were not suitable to one holding episcopal office.'

The Guardian's summary, no doubt due to pressure of spac and time, does not reflect the courtesy, sympathy and persona kindness towards Bishop Barnes which characterized the Primate' criticism of him, nor does it seem to us to interpret rightly th more profound significance of the Primate's treatment of th ecclesiastical crisis.

This inner significance we believe to be more adequately ex pressed in the Primate's own summary:

> 'I have spoken with grief and, I hope, with charity. Lik so many others, I have a great regard and affection for th Bishop and a deep respect for the sincerity of his devotion t the cause of truth as he sees it and as he loves it. And for any one who values as I do freedom of thought and discussion, i is an unwelcome task to seem to censure it, especially at time when the liberal temper of mind is often unjustly dis paraged and in much of the world endangered or violently suppressed. What I think ought to be said I have tried to say and there I would leave the matter.'

These words exhibit the horns of the dilemma with which th Primate found himself confronted. The Primate is a convince Liberal, and was therefore most anxious not to condemn liberalism or give any support to that intolerant ecclesiasticism which is re solved to extirpate liberalism from the Church of England. O the other hand, he was faced by the demand of a large body o Churchmen that he should take disciplinary action against th Bishop of Birmingham. This disciplinary action must involv trying the Bishop of Birmingham for heresy in the Court of Arche by the Primate's Vicar General. This the Primate was resolve not to do. This decision seems to us to be entirely judicious. Suc a trial would have created great scandal and have made th Primate the antagonist of Religious Liberalism in the Church o England. That would have been a tragedy for the influence of th Church on the Nation.

Moreover, had the Bishop of Birmingham, after being con demned for heresy, appealed against the judgment of the Cour of Arches to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council i

Causes Ecclesiastical, it is quite probable that his appeal would have been successful, and this would have resulted in a painful rebuff to the Primate and would have entailed his payment of some thousands of pounds in legal costs. Hence the Primate's decision not to prosecute the Bishop for heresy must receive the support of all responsible Churchmen.

Nevertheless, it was impossible for the Primate to remain silent; he had to speak. But he had no desire to censure, nor even, to use his own words, 'seem to censure,' the Bishop of Birmingham, whose love of truth and whose devotion to the Christian religion he recognized and commended. There were, however, in the Bishop's book statements with which the Primate could not agree, and these statements caused grief and pain to a number of highly placed Churchmen. It was these statements which the Primate in his presidential address condemned. He even went so far as to say of the Bishop of Birmingham's views: 'If his views were mine, I should not feel that I could still hold episcopal office in the Church.'

By this declaration the Primate not only satisfied the more responsible of the Bishop's critics and liberated his own conscience, but he also granted freedom to the Bishop of Birmingham to act according to his conscience. This the Bishop did when he replied to the Primate that his views were 'compatible' with his retention of his bishopric; and, may we add, that from the point of view of the influence of the Church on the Nation, it would have been a calamity had the Bishop decided otherwise. And with this the ecclesiastical crisis terminated.

As Liberals we have cause for gratitude. The rights of truth and freedom have not been infringed: indeed, they have been definitely enlarged. Both the Primate and the Bishop can now conscientiously co-operate together and hold their respective offices in the Church, although differing in their views on a number of doctrinal and historical issues. As a consequence the comprehensiveness of the Church of England has once more been maintained and the way left open for further advance into the fuller understanding of spiritual and moral truth. We have little doubt that, when what has occurred is re-viewed through the retrospect of our English Church history, it will be seen that all the points upon which the Primate and Bishop differed were not primary, but secondary and unimportant in comparison with the basic truths which they hold in common. Once again an ecclesiastical crisis has opened the way towards a further advance in the realization of the creative unity which characterizes the English Church, expressed in the motto: In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

By Sir Henry Self, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.B.E., B.D.

I. Root of the Argument

IT is difficult enough to stand here to-night as your President in line of succession to so many eminent leaders of religious thought in this country. It will, therefore, not surprise you if I do not attempt to follow in their footsteps and offer a dissertation designed to mark the road of further intellectual progress. No man can give other than that which is in him or that which has become part of himself by assimilation of his experience. It is thus inevitable that my address will seek to put forward the standpoint of a man of affairs, but yet one actuated by an enquiring mind to continual efforts to express and re-express the philosophy of life implied in such a practical experience.

It is perhaps relevant that the experience so drawn upon has for a period of forty years been primarily concerned with Government administration, and you will possibly be wondering whether there is anything to be learned from an approach of this character. I suggest that, however inadequate may be the presentation, there is nevertheless real advantage in a review starting from such a basis. The Government administrator must be concerned to get below the surface and discern the fundamental forces regulating the flux of events. These forces may be subconscious in character but they are there and can be discerned and assessed by the right approach. To get to them requires a quality of mind which should be especially developed and applied by administration within the field of government. The true purpose of a Government organization is to get to grips with fundamentals and ensure that the national activities flow along sound lines toward approved objectives, without flouting the principles underlying the national and international situation, but rather ensuring that by their faithful observance they themselves will guarantee the desired ends. It is here just as much a case of conquering nature by obeying her as in the field of organic life. Mind and matter have a common ground, though diverse in action. The laws of mental life operate as inexorably as those of the physical world. To flout or ignore them is to court disaster. Properly understood and applied the

themselves guide to the determination of right objectives and equally to the means of attainment.

By right objectives I mean those objectives which are practicable in the nature of things; *i.e.* achievement must be governed by hard matter of fact, and it is a first essential to ensure that action flows in knowledge of what are the underlying principles which must be observed and brought into application.

I believe that you will detect throughout my address this fundamental thought seeking to become explicit. Man fails to bring into conscious expression the underlying forces which experience should reveal to him as present here and operative behind world history. We have to guide man's assessment of his destiny, and even more so his appreciation of the means by which he should achieve it, not only by knowledge of what man is in himself, but also and equally by knowledge of what the universe is in itself. I shall be seeking to bring home my belief that man is 'missing the mark' to-day because his sense of destiny, and the means he employs in pursuit of it, do not take account of the substratum underlying the visible universe which is in fact demonstrated by human experience to be not merely in support but definitely in control. We must first and foremost seek to understand what is this substratum and what part it plays in our existence and our future. Surely we must readjust our whole outlook if we find that we have not heretofore correctly understood the nature of that background to the life of humanity as written large in the panorama of human history?

II. The Lesson of History

With the aftermath of the Second World War of this century weighing heavily upon us, who can resist the conclusion that man either is the victim and the instrument of a blind and irrational life force operating through this universe or else is enduring the consequences of some persistent failure on his own part to adapt his existence to the fundamental laws of that universe? Human values as so abundantly brought to lasting expression throughout history make it impossible to credit the former alternative, and it is not difficult to see that the latter is the more likely explanation.

We have been confronted in our lifetime by a historical sequence wherein the rational order, which was the pride of the humanity living within it, was shaken to the foundations by the onrush over a period of thirty years of a terrible irrationality, itself finding expression in the lust for power of evil genius. We now find ourselves groping towards reconstruction and the creation of

a new rational order which will secure the further development of the race.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that man himself provoked the irrationality both by his failure to shape the original order in conformity with the fundamental principles of the universe in which it sought to exist—and also by his persistent inability to adapt it progressively to meet new developments arising through the operation of these principles. In short, modern civilization has been brought to the fringe of disaster through its attempt to organize itself as though there were no other factors to be allowed for beyond those immediately patent to human eyes. The tragedy of the past thirty-five years has manifested the certainty that the world social structure was so inadequate to the development of the race as to become in definite conflict with the underlying processes of human activity. The extent of the inadequacy was revealed by the cataclysm that ensued.

But this was no isolated case. The rise and fall of nations, races and even of civilizations has demonstrated again and again the certainty of an underlying order against which human structures have worn themselves out to final extinction. The process may have been long measured by human standards, and may indeed have yielded ephemeral supremacy either to nations, groups or individuals—but this has generally been at the expense of the other members of the human race and in any event has led by stages to degeneracy and ultimate extinction.

The measure of it all is best assessed in terms of the most potent of all human futilities, *viz.* the urge to aggrandizement, whether individual or national. Surely history manifests (and to no generation more emphatically than to this) that aggrandizement is contrary to the law of the universe and must result in ultimate extinction? Not merely the two world wars of this century, but even more so the present world realization of the futility of 'empire by domination' make this, to my mind, clear beyond a shadow of doubt.

A development of the argument, which time does not permit, would warrant sympathetic examination of the hypothesis that human history presents a *prima facie* case for the belief that the universe is grounded in moral values. The disasters attendant on aggrandizement are but one strand of evidence—other moral values can be put to the test as criteria for the interpretation of human history. For example, Kant included in his catalogue of moral principles the maxims which reconciled the world as the 'Kingdom of Ends' with the individual as a personality of worth

and a legitimate 'end' in himself. It would be interesting to measure the historic rise and fall of civilizations by the success or failure to promote the valid interests of both the State and the individual and to hold them in a just and reciprocal balance.

Tests in such manner of the historic significance of moral values would be likely, in the view of many, to warrant recognition of their validity as basic principles to which human life here is subject. The case is not claimed to be one which can stand complete rational proof; neither is it suggested that it would be universally accepted; the argument is simply that a *primæ facie* case would suggest itself that there is authority behind this visible universe which is, so far as human existence is concerned, operating in terms of moral values. The case is thus not advanced as one capable of proof, but as a strand to be incorporated with others forthcoming from other fields of human experience and to be tested in common with them by the standards of probability and verification in working practice.

If this world of ours is subject to higher authority based on moral values, surely it is time that human policies and activities took account of the fact? War ought at least to have driven this deep into our intelligence.

III. The Lesson of Science

The fact of a controlling background to the visible universe seems also to be hinted at increasingly by science as it explores the new regions of the infinitesimal opened up by the development of nuclear physics. The argument here is not based on the forthcoming conclusions reached in this respect by several leading mathematical physicists in recent years: their sceptical colleagues are sufficiently critical of those conclusions to necessitate an approach of a different order.

This is not concerned to find conclusions which will admit of rational proof. That, in the nature of the case, is not within the bounds of possibility. Science is concerned with the physical universe and to detect the principles through which it functions. These cannot be expected to apply of necessity to a non-physical and controlling background, if such exists; indeed, the probability would be that they were specifically applied by the latter as the appropriate means for creating and maintaining what we know as the physical world. Therefore, scientists as such cannot be the guides to the nature of the non-physical world; certainly we need not be unduly impressed or depressed by the endeavours of the

ultra-sceptical to restrict man's life and interest to the confines of his physical habitation.

Again it is a case of seeking probability rather than demonstrative proof — and of trying to frame a *prima facie* case for further examination with others in a wider context, to the discernment of which it has contributed. Science has so widely expanded man's vision of his immediate environment that it can well help the discernment of the probabilities of the inner life by the process of analogy. The enquiry itself is governed by the hypothesis that life is not a farce: the logical development of this must be that the physical world as revealed by science is not in conflict with its controlling background (if such there be) and may thus provide pointers to the analogies obtaining between the two spheres in their interaction and kinship.

It has long been the claim of religious philosophy that an approach of this character would show science over its whole field as being in general support of the probability (putting it no higher) of a non-physical and controlling background of this physical world. The *prima facie* case so established has been greatly strengthened by the recent developments of nuclear physics.

Here we must limit the field for present discussion. We cannot consider the philosophical implications of the power and exactness of the new mathematical machine of Relativity in its forecasts of the phenomena which will be observed under stated conditions. This testifies strongly to the common ground which must embrace both mind and matter — and such a ground can scarcely be other than a non-physical and controlling background to both.

Neither can we embark on a review of the Quantum Theory or the contrasted picture presented by Wave Mechanics. The latter has done much to introduce the principle of Indeterminacy into the heart of the region of the infinitesimal; whilst the former leads to a new perspective of the ordered structure and pattern of the universe. The electronic theory of valency, for example, tends to reduce chemistry to mathematics—albeit extremely involved. The picture presented is that of great intricacy of pattern, massiveness and regularity of structure, complete interchangeability of units, yet with facilities under appropriate conditions for transmutation of the fundamental elements — and all this combined with a measure of indeterminacy in the conduct of the so-called 'ultimate' particles which build up those elements by the equipoise of their behaviour within a common environment or field of so-called electro-magnetism — itself beyond explanation. The further surprise is that the indeterminacy of the infinitesimal

particles is presumed, though unpredictable individually, to be capable of pre-determination in the aggregate within the limits of definite laws of statistical probability. What is all this but a reflection in modified dress of the conceptions which would suggest themselves to an intelligent human being seeking to build and operate an organization designed to subserve purpose. If so, it does not seem unreasonable to credit this development of science as also subscribing to the *prima facie* case already advanced.

It is when we turn to the further development of nuclear physics that the greatest contribution is to be found. The so-called 'ultimate' particles of modern physics (the electron, positron, proton, neutron, mesotron, deuteron, neutrinon, etc.) do not seem to be ultimate after all. They can seemingly disappear by their interaction and subsequent transformation into radiation. The whole picture is completely transformed. The real ultimate is 'energy'; but what that is, science cannot say; we can only recognize it by its activities and attributes. Equally, we have no revelation as to what may be the inner nature of electricity and magnetism as the warp and weft of the fabric upon which energy is manifested. 'Matter' itself has lost its solidity and been revealed as the fraud which religion always suspected it to be: even its attribute of 'mass' has now been torn from it and credited to 'energy.' 'Mass' is an attribute of 'energy'—and 'matter' becomes, in a layman's terminology, the manifestation of 'congealed energy.' If conditions can exist, as we now know to be the case, where this 'congealment' can be eliminated—at least in part—it is equally established that conditions can obtain under which the 'congealment' can be established. The release of atomic energy, either by disruption of higher elements into lower or by the reverse build-up of lower elements into higher, suggests that the universe is so organized as to enable energy to appear as matter in its various forms or alternatively matter to be transformed into radiant energy. The whole system is thus a function of energy.

'Energy' to the human mind inevitably connotes 'purpose' for which it is generated and employed by a controlling agency. It is thus normally an expression of 'Will.' As we pass through the crumbling particles of nuclear physics into the void in which energy expresses itself, we must surely be ready to regard with a measure of sympathy our analogical urge to postulate an inner and controlling background to this physical universe which builds it and maintains it by energy as the expression of its 'Will' towards the realization of its 'Purpose.'

This, then, is the *prima facie* case which we suggest is yielded by scientific analogy in support of the working hypothesis previously advanced for test in the light of a wider context and experience. History yielded the thought that there may be an inner background to life grounded in moral values; science adds the tentative notion that it may equally be actuated by 'purpose' and 'will.'

IV. The Lesson of Culture

To the contribution of history and science we must add those forthcoming from human culture generally. This may perhaps be regarded as primarily the expression of man's artistic, philosophic and religious experiences.

It is unnecessary here to develop the subject of art beyond suggesting that the artist is always seeking to reveal his vision of the inner meaning and nature of the background to life. This he apprehends to be behind, yet ever seeking to manifest itself through the visible world. The innate artistic instincts of man testify strongly to the hypothesis that this world of ours is supported and controlled by a non-physical background.

The philosophical field is too extensive and controversial for detailed treatment here. It must suffice to claim that the very intensity of the philosophical urge in man — ever returning to the argument no matter how vehement the scepticism of the day — itself testifies to man's innate belief that there is a background to life. The persistent effort to elucidate or demolish such belief itself demonstrates that there is a *prima facie* case for it.

And so we come to the context within which must be found the test of this *prima facie* case. This has been advanced from all branches of man's thought and practice; it may therefore be anticipated that the test must be made in that region of life which seeks to focus man's relationship to his environment and to its controlling background, if such there be. This clearly is the function of religion, to which we must look for the test of our hypothesis.

There can be no two opinions but that man's religious experience presents an overwhelming consensus of belief in an inner and superior order to that of the physical world. It is not a matter of rational proof — but of rational probability, itself confirmed by experience founded in faith. The probability, when accepted as the basis for the venture of faith, has yielded conviction through experience; the venture becomes its own guarantor.

Thus man reaches a reasonable belief in the 'inner world,' but it postulates either a response from that world or a revelation of its nature to which man's gropings are a preliminary approach. The reasonableness of the case would be grievously weakened if there were no ground for believing also in a historic revelation of the character of that background and the nature of its relationship to life here. It is here that we come at length to grips with the subject of the tasks and prospects of the Christian Religion to-day.

V. The Essence of Christianity

No other world religion approaches the status of the Revelation of God proclaimed by Christianity. In this consists its essence and distinction. If this aspect be eliminated then Christianity is reduced to a system of ethics—good, but with no prospect of offering Salvation to man, especially in his present critical position.

By contrast, the grandeur of the Christian Revelation is overpowering. The postulates of our prior approaches—Moral Values, Purpose, Beauty, Wisdom and Character—are all revealed as the basic principles of the controlling background. But we see them as focussed in, and the expression of, Divine Personality, knitting together the inner life of humanity by the bonds of spiritual relationship and fellowship.

This—the Christian Revelation—is the only hope of the world. Men must have re-presented to them the doctrine of the Incarnation and all that flows therefrom. In it they should find the rational climax of all human expectations, and the only possible basis for human hopes and aspirations. It must be seen as the counterpart of all human gropings towards understanding—itself inspiring them and fulfilling their promise. This is, however, conditional upon preparedness to make it the basis for that venture of faith which alone can bring conviction and strength to achieve.

VI. The Task of Christianity

So we would assert that the prior task of Christianity is to reproclaim its doctrine in terms which men can understand and with no hesitancy as to its claims to men's acceptance. Christianity to-day needs:

(*a*) to know itself;
(*b*) to accept itself; and
(*c*) to offer itself.

There is room to doubt whether all the official custodians of Christian tradition really know its vital essentials; certainly the

hesitancy to preach doctrine to-day suggests a parallel measure of unreadiness to accept it, and still less to proclaim it, as meeting modern conditions. To this must primarily be attributed the current indifference to institutional religion and the growing agnosticism prevalent among thinking men.

The uneasy preoccupation of nations with earthly affairs and futures calls for a bold insistence on the fact of an inner and controlling background to life—and the identification of the Christian Kingdom of Heaven with that other world. This must be stressed as a vital factor in all human plans, policies and activities. The character of that controlling authority, as revealed through the Incarnation, manifests principles and spiritual values which must determine human destiny. For example, self-aggrandizement by exploitation (whether individualistic or national) has no place in the scheme of things, and must give way to self-realization by service. Similarly, modern Pelagianism must yield; man cannot achieve observance of those principles and the realization of his destiny by his own strength or self-sufficiency.

VII. The Prospects of Christianity

The prospects of Christianity thus turn on its re-presentation as meeting the needs and rational expectations of the modern world. The honest scepticism underlying the apathy and despair of so many to-day makes such re-statement of the central doctrines imperative. Their essence must remain unimpaired, because it has stood the test of time and alone can guide the salvation of mankind. They languish because they are so rarely presented — and then only with hesitancy in archaic terminology which repels enquiry.

The prospects of Christianity turn on:

(*a*) Emphasis on the eternal validity of its gospel;

(*b*) re-presentation of its doctrine, unimpaired in essence but re-stated in terms related to modern thought and practice;

(*c*) the declaration of the spiritual world so revealed as in control of this world and therefore the critical factor in all human affairs; and

(*d*) its promise of man's spiritual destiny and its assurance of strength to ultimate attainment.

VIII. The Modern Christology

In short, Christianity will only succeed if it is true to itself. Its focus is Christ; its message is focussed on Him. The greates

difficulties to modern acceptance of Christianity turn on the inadequate and archaic presentation of this central issue.

The need is to re-present the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, without change of essence but in terms which men to-day can understand and appreciate. If we believe in the reality of Christ, there is no need to fear the consequence. The impact of His Presence, where conscientiously sought, is the assurance of all Christian experience and the guarantee of the outcome.

Might not the re-presentation, moreover, attempt the reciprocal exposition to that traditionally offered? The latter points the way through the life and death of the historic Jesus to the Eternal Christ, as the Focus of humanity. Could not the exposition then reverse the process and, accepting the validity of the former argument, offer a cosmology based on the prior fact of the Eternal Christ — Himself the Focus of the Spiritual World, the Norm of all human destiny and the indwelling Presence in the human heart?

If Christ IS — surely man's salvation can only be found by recognition of His authority and a whole-hearted response thereto. This is the fundamental claim of Christianity and the present world situation demands its re-affirmation clearly and emphatically.

CAN WE BE RELIGIOUS TO-DAY?

By T. Wigley, M.A., Author of *The Necessity of Christian Modernism*, etc.

GILBERT Murray begins his study, *Stoic, Christian and Humanist*, with these words:

> 'The life of man can be divided, like the old maps of the world, into the charted and uncharted. The charted is finite and the other infinite.'

He then goes on to compare the influences which the charted and the uncharted have had upon individual and social reactions, the sober spirit of the one fruitful in science and philosophy and practical results, the uncertain spirit of the other producing victims of anarchy within and without as men face the incalculable. The division is not clear-cut, for, as Dr. Murray observes:

> 'The deadest rationalist has some consciousness of mystery, the most helpless mystic some gleams of common sense. Still, on the whole, as society advances in security and human beings in intellectual culture, there is an increase in the range of knowledge and reason and the proportion which they occupy in life. As the social order decays and the level of culture falls, the irrational element in life grows and the little island of light amid the darkness grows smaller still' (p. 23).

He would be a bold man who without a peradventure dared to classify our own age under either category. Our recognition of the need for planning may in itself be a testimony to the danger of chaos. So much depends on our answer to the questions, planning by whom and for what? So often the charted becomes the one and only way, and the venturer in thought is condemned as the enemy of the people, a convenient term of abuse for those who question the *status quo*; tradition should always be suspect when it can gain its ends only under another name. Of the increase in our knowledge there can be no doubt, what is more doubtful is whether reason has grown to the same extent. It is this discrepancy between our knowing and our reasoning which has led many people in bewilderment to seek refuge in the irrational. R. Crawshay-Williams' useful and sometimes amusing enquiry into the motives behind irrational thought, to which he gives the intriguing title *The Comforts of Unreason*, exposes the virulence of irrationality which all unconsciously is actively against clear-thinking; it is certainly an attitude of mind or mindlessness which has to be taken into account in any estimate of possibilities when prejudices are unquestioned and are disguised as principles. I see that Rayner Heppenstall in

is book *The Double Image*, an examination of the Christian Myth n the works of various French writers, makes the same point. He ttributes to this virus our present-day conversions to a primitive r elaborate form of Christianity, no less than orgiastic political ollectivism or reactionary nationalism. His comment is worth oting :

> 'They desire beyond all retention *to know what to do*. "Knowing" what to do means for the great majority "being told" what to do. This becomes clear not only from the study of Fascism, National Socialism, Communism and Tory Nationalism, from Catholicism and no less from Protestant Revivalism in the work of Karl Barth and his colleagues, but from the tendency of uprooted and uncertain people in the last resort to fall ill and to put themselves in the hands of a doctor. . . .'

f such refugees-from-reason are to be religious, religion for hem must be presented dogmatically and with authority; so long as he servile mind demands the stamp of the slave, so long will dictatorship in religion, morals and politics, continue to impress it.

But this state of mind is by no means widespread. The majority f people regard religion and the questions which religion asks nd seeks to answer as simply irrelevant to their life and thought. A few influential persons may still pretend to be interested in order o provide what they regard as a necessary support for the good norals of the masses, but even this minority of subscribers from he outside is rapidly dwindling, and there is less and less attempt eing made to hide what used to be called 'unbelief.' Rather doubtfully Mass-Observation's inquiry into popular attitudes to eligion, ethics, progress, and politics is called *Puzzled People*, ut what is reported of a 'London semi-suburban borough' is probably true of all our large cities — nominal believers are vague nd qualified in their adherence to the creeds, the under forties are often hostile, and personal religion consists in 'being kind and neighbourly, doing good when opportunity arises.' No one can all this a negative state of mind; it is far removed from the belief hat there is nothing in life worthy of attaining, for the most ordinary man recognizes that such a negativism would empty more than eligion of any meaning or interest; he does not forget that it is possible to be self-deceived even in his disillusionments. On the whole we may describe this majority as conventionally non-religious. Their state of mind is somewhat similar to that of the students of an American University at which a visiting speaker who was to address them on the subject 'Religion' was handed copy of the College Newspaper, in which an editorial dealt with he same subject. It said :

> 'That there is a definite lack of interest in religious matters on the campus cannot be denied. There are several religious groups established

> here but they affect only a comparatively small proportion of the students. There are various causes for this indifference to religion. The university may be a minor factor in the attitude, but its influence is confined to accelerating the development of views which are bound to appear sooner or later. The real reason for the great decline in religion among college students is that they often feel it is no longer of use.'

It is, I think, no answer to such students to say that the idea of being of use is reminiscent of magic rather than of religion. The pragmatic test may not be philosophically beyond reproach, but it can and will be legitimately employed in practical affairs. Rather I would stress the fact that to-day the question at issue is not concerning the authority of the Bible, miracles, birth-stories, resurrection-narratives, and the like, nor even the question, 'Can we still be Christian?' It is the fundamental question, 'Can we be religious to-day?' What are the conditions to be met in giving an affirmative answer?

Some will reply with an emphatic 'No,' alleging that religious feelings and ideas have no corresponding objective reality, that God is an illusion. Psychologically some may, with James H. Leuba, urge that the most profitable task before humanity to-day is not to obtain a reliable definition of God, but to learn how, by what method or technique, what is accounted good — and by some called 'divine' — can be secured by man or incarnated in human nature. For them the question is this:

> 'Are the fruits of traditional religion really due to the intervention of the God worshipped, or does the religious method set in activity forces resident in human nature, of which science is slowly gaining the mastery and which it is learning to use far more effectively than they have ever been used in religious worship?'

Others will say, as J. B. S. Haldane said in 1929,[1] that man lives in two worlds, the visible and the invisible, the changing and the unchanging, to be described only as they appear to us from a human and imperfect standpoint, and says Haldane:

> 'I believe that the scientist is trying to express absolute truth and the artist absolute beauty, so that I find in science and art, and in an attempt to lead a good life, all the religion that I want.'

I would suggest that such an affirmation implies more than Haldane is probably ready to admit, even when he goes on to say:

> 'If you do not make any contact with this timeless world (in other words, have no inner life) you have at best a very precarious hold on happiness.'

Those who would call themselves religious are divided by a horizontal line into traditionalists and modernists. The line of division is not perpendicular between Church and Church, religion and

[1] *The Inequality of Man*, p. 203 f.

eligion, but between two different types of mind which are repre-
ented in all religions and in all Churches. In times of internal
nd external stress and uncertainty there is, as we have seen, a
natural tendency for the confused to grasp eagerly at anything,
whether system of thought or political or ecclesiastical institution,
which promises safety; at such times the lure of the mother and
he sweet security of the womb becomes so powerful that many
nake that return to the infantile with the unconscious prayer on
heir lips, that they will never be born again. Not for traditionalist
or neurotic the continuance of a state of puzzled misery when the
comforts of unreason can be obtained at the price of retrogression.
The modernist in religion represents what Henry Jones called 'a
aith that enquires.' His is a critical mind which does not, as some
ssert, mean a destructive or an empty mind, for criticism should
e the first step towards appreciation as well as understanding.
He is not without convictions, though he is more ready than the
raditionalist to admit that his convictions are assumptions which
nay be progressively verified in experience but are not undeniable
n logic. His essential conviction is that reality has meaning and
hat at its highest levels it can be interpreted in what for want of
n better word he calls 'spiritual terms.' While recognizing the
nadequacy of language, I would myself go further and say that
such terms must for man be personal, since these are the highest
nd most embracing modes of thought and expression he knows.

Following this way of enquiry and conviction I would further
claim that no apprehension or expression of any kind of truth is
inal; relative to the past the truth of to-day is final because it con-
ains within itself all that is true in the past in more comprehensive
orm; there can be no going back to outgrown modes of thought,
ut it is relative to whatever truth the future may disclose. Hence
he supreme need is to be tolerant of experimentation and earnest
n permitting the freedom in which the creative artist is encouraged
o do his work. Tradition may contain truth, but it is not neces-
sarily true, and since I am neither a traditionalist in religion nor
n absolutist in philosophy, I suggest we must be content with
approximation to the truth rather than bemuse ourselves with the
notion that we possess the whole truth here and now. In these days
when the use of words is being closely studied there is no need for
ne to remind you that all our words are but verbal symbols more or
ess adequate, but never fully adequate, to express our thought
or experience. Make-do-and-never-mend is a poor slogan with
which to face the future; in fact the time comes when mending is
mpossible, and the need for a new suit becomes urgent; such a
ime has come so far as presenting religion as a reality is concerned.

First there are what we may call the 'immediacies' qualitative or relational, then there are our ideas adequate or inadequate of these immediacies, and then, probably still more inadequate than our ideas, the terms we use to express our ideas. No wonder A. N. Whitehead says, 'Expression is the one fundamental sacrament'; it is a sacrament of which we cannot partake unless we are humble in mind and pure in heart. So far we have not, perhaps wisely, attempted any definition of religion, although some indications of what being religious means have already appeared. It is clear that if man to-day is to be religious, he must not be asked to jump out of the skin of his own world and his own experience in order to be so. Either man's own here and now evokes and sustains the religious mind, or man cannot be religious; being religious by proxy is an impossibility, and to echo the voices of previous generations is a poor substitute for the living voice of to-day. The intelligent modern man, even more than his predecessors, is conscious of the pressure of the infinite reality in which he is set and to which he responds in various ways, and he could well do with a modernized version of Schleiermacher's *Discourses upon Religion, addressed to the Educated among its Despisers*, published in 1799; they are not to be despised as products of the romantic spirit. Did not Seeley in his *Natural Religion* (1882) also find in the enthusiastic appreciation of the man of science and of the artist a sense of the divine which was wanting in more orthodox ages? And Bosanquet concludes in his *Value and Destiny of the Individual* (1913):

> 'In short, then, wherever man fairly and loyally throws the seat of his value outside his immediate self into something else which he worships, with which he identifies his will, and which he takes as an object solid and secure, at least relatively, to his private experience — as an artist in his attitude to beauty, or as a man of science to truth — there we have in its degree the experience of religion, and also in its degree, the stability and security of the finite self' (p. 235).

I would therefore claim that religion as thus described is organic to man who is part and parcel of a universe which itself is most adequately interpreted in organismic terms. It means the end of a dualism of natural and supernatural which has for long distorted theological statement, and whose consequences are assumed to be statement of fact in traditional theology. Our religion must emphasize what Whitehead calls 'the unity of ideal inherent in the universe' (*Modes of Thought*, p. 39), or it will prove unacceptable to-day. In a sentence from his *Religion in the Making* (p. 6):

> 'Religion is the art and the theory of the internal life of man, so far as it depends on the man himself and on what is permanent in the nature of things.'

We cannot therefore separate man from his world with which he is in vital integration in action, reaction and renewal; he is shaken out of himself by his dreams and by his needs; the tension is within himself and between himself and his environing world with all its questions and answers; and it is within what we may call these two worlds, which in reality are one, that man finds or misses — fulfilment. That is a word which repeatedly recurs in the writings of the distinguished novelist, Charles Morgan. In a beautiful essay which he contributed to the *Sunday Times* (9.3.47) he asks the question, what really endures as we look back? And he answers:

> 'Never the bought pleasures, always the natural delights. Never the seizures of pride, but the searchings of wonder. Never the grasping of knowledge, but the feeling for wisdom. Never the thing or the person, but our own imagination of the thing or the person, the grace that we had the grace to receive . . . In the end all that is left, all that proves itself ever to have been real, is not the conditions of our existence but the impact of our own spirit upon those conditions . . . If this moment through which we are now living is to have value for us, we ourselves must endow it with value; we must have grace to receive the grace.'

That is what being religious means, and if we have never known such high moments of revelation and discovery, of receiving and self-giving, we shall never be religious, though one spoke with the tongues of men and of angels or the dead rose before our eyes. If some men are incapable of such apprehension, let them at least recognize their limitations and cease pretending that their partial is complete.

Religion then is a function of man's whole nature individually and racially, and it will vary according to every stage of his development. For modern man the conditions which must be fulfilled if any religion is to gain his whole-hearted assent are at least three, *viz.* it must satisfy his intellect that it is true, which means that it adequately covers the relevant facts; it must satisfy him willing by providing an adequate object as the supreme good with which he can identify himself and strive to attain; it must engage and order his emotions in such a way that they provide the dynamic of attainment. I would add that in all three aspects of man's life, knowing, willing, and feeling, there is need for constant revision, appraisal, and cultivation with the best aids which are available. Nothing can be done with the unteachable mind in whose ignorance superstitions grow rankly, with the mind which in practice denies any vital relationship between the ethical and the religious, with the mind so cold or so dissipated in emotions that it is incapable of identifying itself with any object-other-than-itself. A religion which satisfies these conditions will so harmonize faith with

knowledge and life that it may truly be called reasonable, since it will be a natural emergent from the here and now.

You will remember that Höffding, after pointing out that every conception of life is determined by the values found or produced in real life, reminded his readers that Goethe defined the task of the poetic art to be 'clothing reality in a poetical form' and not 'realizing the so-called poetical'; similarly the task of religion is to make life ideal and harmonious, not to realize artificial ideals imposed from without. In a word, to use a distinction of J. L. Stocks,[2] religion makes a 'total assertion' which, unlike 'partial assertions,' can never be proved beyond a doubt; that is why the sciences progress by confining themselves to the partiality. Martin Johnson's suggestion of an analogy in the word 'pattern' between the 'truth' of a scientific explanation of experience and the judgment that some element of experience conveys Beauty or Goodness is a useful one; he contrasts the pattern which is 'true' in science with the pattern which satisfies in art or morality, those other instincts than the purely logical. I like his warning that we shall not exclude from the exercise of our minds, 'a disciplined audacity of the poetic imagination.'[3] In such a statement we have passed beyond the threshold of religion without leaving the reasonable behind us in dealing with facts as values; at our peril we ignore facts in any realm, and because of the danger of selecting our facts if we are to be religious to-day, we must take care to found our religious experience on the ultimate ground of thought and being, and to bring it into intimate relationship with all our knowledges. If we refuse to face the problem of knowledge, we do but deliver ourselves into the hands of a psychology which banishes religion as man's supreme illusion. All this is involved in the total assertion religion makes, if it is to validate its claim to be reasonable, and apart from this metaphysical basis Dr. Joad's longing[4] for consolation, strengthening, and assistance in a world of which he despairs, is a vain beating of the air. The appeal to religious experience in isolation can never provide an escape from subjectivism, we must pass from theology to philosophy.

Our words may symbolize rather than truly represent objective reality, but if they contribute to our own integral insight, we may legitimately assume that they correspond in their measure to a universe whose answers back they are. Our language is subjective but its content grows in objectivity, understanding and apprecia-

[2] See his *Nature and Grounds of Religious Belief*, 1934.

[3] See his *Science and the Meanings of Truth*, and *Art and Scientific Thought*.

[4] See *The Rationalist Annual*, 1946, p. 65 f.

tion, whether our way lies through the sciences, the arts, religion or philosophy, it is the way of 'effort, and expectation, and desire.' In the end we may discover that truth and goodness have their roots in the holy, and flower in the beautiful. Such integral insight, creative imagination, is the natural product of a universe which can be expressed in sacramental terms, because it is spiritual in its nature; that is why 'expression is the one fundamental sacrament,' or, to quote again from Whitehead's *Modes of Thought*:

> 'In the greatest examples of any form of art, a miraculous balance is achieved. The whole displays its component parts, each with its own value enhanced; and the parts lead up to a whole which is beyond themselves, and yet not destructive of themselves . . . The essence of great experience is penetration into the unknown, the unexperienced . . . Our lives are passed in the experience of disclosure' (p. 86 f).

But is not this what the great artists in religion have always claimed? Convince the common man of it, and he can be religious in a response which is a unity to a Universe which is likewise a unity. It is the end of 'wholly other' as man grows as person comprehending within himself more and more of reality. An imaginative construct, some may say, but have the ultimate concepts of physics any logically firmer basis or indeed as firm in ordinary experience? And can we apart from our integral insight, the product of fulfilling the three conditions I have suggested, ever hope to penetrate the nature of things? When all is said and done, man's mind is what it is because his world is what it is, and has developed in response to the stimulation of that world. Why then should anyone deny to the religious response the validity he allows to other mental processes, and calmly assume that it has no meaning or correspondence in reality? Such response will express itself in diverse ways, intellectually, emotionally, and in ideal. Many crutches will be left behind as man learns to walk, and more when he learns to use his wings. Always there will be need for repentance and conversion even of the religious, as the partial is done away; dissolution itself may be a sign of grace; and where the theological myth divides let us at least hold fast to the humanities of the spirit against the fanaticisms which exclude, for, in Guyau's words, 'The only universal thing ought to be the complete freedom given to individuals to represent in their own way the eternal enigma.'

SOME PROBLEMS OF PROVIDENCE

By Dr. C. J. Wright

TO-DAY the agelong drama of human history is, once again, in violent process. Another stage has been reached. Its *dénouement* is still uncertain and obscure. What we *do* know, in our inmost souls, is that vast and far-reaching changes — in religious thought, in social life, in ecclesiastical structure and function, in international relations — are being urgently called for. A new adventure in human history beckons us. Another step in human evolution confronts us.

'The times' call. But it is one thing for 'the times' — or God — to call; it is another thing for people to hear and to answer. For — in spite of all determinisms, whether economic or theological — men are persons, not puppets; spirits, not machines. Should more widespread disaster come, the fault will be, not in our stars, but in ourselves: not in our institutions but in our hearts: not in our philosophies or theologies, or in whatever be our ideologies, but in their makers. Neither reason nor faith, for example, tells of a Cosmic Dictator who will prevent us from exterminating ourselves if we are stupid enough to set about it, refusing to learn the main lesson of our times. For all the avoidable 'evils' of history come because we are still 'underlings' when we are called to be 'sons': that is, working for wages and applause instead of sharing the creative and redemptive nature of the Son of the One Father, 'demented with the mania of owning things,' instead of inspired by the passion of the Kingdom of God.

Was not that the message of Jesus? And was not His essential mission to be the One Divine Father's channel of a redeeming, integrating, life-giving and life-fulfilling purpose in history? But we have ceased to emphasize what He emphasized, having put among our parentheses what He reiterated.

'Can we still be Christian?' How much easier to ask, and even to answer, whether positively or negatively, such a question in a Paper, a Sermon, a Book, than to confront the real question. Which is, Who is a 'Christian'? What are the marks of a 'Christian'? This much deeper and more searching question arises, not as we engage in dialectic encounters, either with ourselves or with others, but as we refuse to escape from those prophetic sayings of our Lord which flow directly from Reality, expressing, as they do, the essential meaning of all history.

Such a saying, for example, as that recorded by S. Matthew

n the form, 'Except ye turn and become as little children ye shall n no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven': or in its Johannine orm, 'Except a man be born anew he cannot see the Kingdom of God.' Or such a saying as that recorded in *S. Luke*, 'And why call e me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say' (vi, 46), vith its fuller form in *S. Matthew*, 'Not every one that saith unto ne, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he hat doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven (vii, 21). For spiritual insight and moral obedience are the key and the lock that open the door of life. These are, as shown in the parable that closes the Sermon on the Mount, both in *S. Matthew* and *S. Luke*, he only foundation of enduring building: a parable which has often been twisted so as to convert speculative conclusions into spiritual and moral foundations.

It is so much easier for teachers and preachers to regard life as a debating society than as a contest with and for reality: as a ight with speculative doubts than as a channel of eternal purposes: as a game for material existence than as a qualifying round in the life eternal. And the basic reason for man's natural preferences —speculatively rationalized in the doctrine of 'original sin,' and speculatively irrationalized in the doctrine that 'sin' is unreal— is that he is morbidly engrossed with himself and his material interests, with his partial inheritances and their perpetuation, with his theoretical shelters, with his own preferential treatment in the Father's whole universe. Could he but *forget* himself — to use our Lord's word, 'deny' himself—he would *find* himself and his own place as a member of the one family of God, the whole host of creatures visible and invisible. Such a discovery would lead to a liberation such as has not been dreamt of in the hedonistic philosophies and soteriologies of mankind. He would then be passionate for Truth instead of Tradition: for the Whole instead of the Part: for the mutable Future instead of for the immutable Past: for the Family instead of for Self: for God instead of for Mammon.

I do not, I trust, underestimate the magnitude of the intellectual issues now confronting, in all wakeful minds, a 'Christian' interpretation of life and the universe. These issues are, necessarily, the background of our mental life. Their very insistence and magnitude, however, is a goad impelling us to go further and to look deeper into the whole matter. I cannot but believe that our new and fuller historical knowledge of Christian origins, our new and fuller scientific understanding of the processes of creative evolution in this unfathomed universe, together with the inescapable pressure of this catastrophic period of human history, are

unitedly compelling Christian teachers to retrace some of the intellectual steps on the tortuous theological road made by our Christian forbears — unitedly commanding us all to cease marking time on this 'dogmatic road' — and to advance under the leadership of the ever-living Spirit of Christ to fresh woods and pastures new.

I would emphasize here 'the whole pressure of this catastrophic period of human history.' For every thoughtful person — however unversed in theological and ecclesiastical history, and however ignorant of the detailed discoveries in the realm of history and of science which the past few generations have introduced — is conscious of this pressure, and dimly or vividly aware of some of the fateful changes demanded. It is this pressure, and not speculative and learned discussions, which have created the vast malaise in the minds of modern men. It is owing to this pressure that pleas —however truthful and true—such as that 'materialism as a creed is bankrupt,' that 'a spiritual interpretation of life is now inescapable,' and so on — occasion a general hesitation, an instinctive distaste, sometimes even a positive nausea. In other words, it is *History itself* which is pressing upon our minds, and shaping them, in spite of all our determined, if still somewhat smug, apologetic and philosophic pleas, to new ways and to new ends.

To those who really believe that God reveals Himself in History — and this is what Christian apologists have, for a generation, been *saying* they believe — this pressure, so disturbing to our minds and so goading to our spirits, is the very Finger of God. It is the way by which man is revealed to himself, and God reveals Himself to man.

It was so in the days of the great prophets of Israel, when *they* were awakened from their dogmatic slumber. What they thought, and said, and wrote, issued from minds absorbed in, and concerned primarily with, the meaning of vast historical events surging within and around them, and bearing their nation, and all the nations, onward. Events were then thrusting Israel willy nilly into the wider stream of the world's life: compelling truthful minds to think in terms of Righteousness instead of Nation, and of One God of the universe instead of a Tribal Potentate. That is, those prophets were not pietistically self-concerned and self-absorbed, worrying about their own 'salvation': they were not speculatively engrossed in fashioning systems of thought wherein they could find an illusory shelter from a tempest of doubts about the kind of 'god' in whom they had been taught to believe: they did not even give themselves, as the teachers of children, to the construction of authoritative dogmas which might seem to make 'salvation' secure and certain: they were not even supremely troubled either about

preserving or about abolishing cult and administrative systems in which they had been reared and on which they had been nourished. They interpreted their age to itself. They were alive to the Whole: sensitive to a Transcendent Purpose: a seismograph of providence, as it has been said, trembling to, and recording, the coming world-shaking movements: a radio-set so attuned that the most distant spaces of the cosmos were able to speak their messages through it: a channel so cleansed that through it could flow the streams of an Immanent and Creative Righteousness: human spirits so single in their aim that to them and through them God Himself was revealed. Lost to self, lost to Mammon — the grain of wheat that has died in the ground. Forgetful of all the psychological devices and propaganda tricks which constitute the wisdom of this fleeting world. Forgetful of their own cleverness, created by the privilege of their rapid cerebrations. Forgetful of men's longing for flattery and speculative security, and for the promises of an egotistic eschatological haven — what men call 'heaven' (so often conceived as a 'haven' with an *e* (an *ego*) in it). Forgetful of sectarian, national and racial animosities, conquests and spoils. Mindful only of an imperative Righteousness, of the demands of a relentless Truth, of the pursuit and challenge of an inescapable Compassion. Theirs was a 'Humanism' grounded in Eternity, a 'Monotheism' inspired by Righteousness. Their passion for truth and righteousness, at whatever cost in pain to themselves, is unmatched in human history.

Those of us who call ourselves the disciples of Christ have a great responsibility for the mental disorder, moral uncertainty, and spiritual distress of our times. 'Ourselves,' please, not 'The Church': lest by divinising a generalization we shelve, avoid, deny, our personal responsibilities. For what is *any* institution apart from its members? Husk without kernel: pod without peas: word without meaning: phantom without reality: shadow without substance: wish without truth: concept without deed. Any institution is, like all History when it is evacuated of the personal beings who give it its meaning and reality, 'full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.' It is no cause for wonder that Shakespeare's familiar lines, expressing a mood of secular despair known to every man, are to-day so frequently cited. Lacking mental, moral and spiritual leadership, sincere and honest men everywhere are distressed in thought and tempted to surrender the basic belief of their essential souls — the belief, namely, that this wondrous universe has Meaning, that this human life has a Goal. How can people believe in Meaning when leaders do not spell it

out in deeds that make it live? How can they even continue to believe in 'God' when they are assured that He once spoke but now is silent? When it is 'proved' that He *was*, not shown that He *is*? That once He called order out of the void but now can only be certainly discerned in a debatable and diminishing number of past recorded events which men in their ignorance and presumption call *miracula*? What rashness! Like that of those in the Gospel record who saw 'Providence' evidenced when the tower of Siloam fell upon the unsuspecting eighteen, and who were convinced that the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices 'were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered these things' (*S. Luke* xiii). Are the moral and spiritual fidelities of men to be computed or decided by the number of their terrestrial days, or by the size of their testamentary estates? Or is God 'evidenced' when the proximate causes of events remain at present undiscovered? Jesus said: 'Except ye repent ye shall *all* likewise perish,' an utterance whose meaning has once again in our own day been revealed in the blinding flash of the atomic bomb. For it says two things that all human history says: first, that happenings issue out of minds and that if happenings are to be good, *metanoia*, change of essential mind and heart, must precede; and second, that *all* are involved in individual decisions. Jesus also said when questioned about the man born blind: 'Neither did this man sin nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him' (*S. John* ix, 1 ff)—an utterance which does not mean that to Jesus God *purposed* this man's blindness, but means that this blindness now confronting Him was to be an *occasion* for the manifestation of the Divine Purpose and that He Himself was now the vehicle of the Divine activity. That is, Jesus knew that the Meaning of History is indwelt by the actions of those who make it live. It is, as we say, dynamic, not static.

Alas that men still prefer to believe in a Meaning they can learn by rote instead of a Meaning they are called to further by disinterested thought and sacrificial deed; using Jesus Himself as a soporific instead of a challenge, a spur, an inspiration; and so denying Him in the inner spirit, while asserting Him in the upper mind for self-comfort or profit.

So it is that the rashness of pseudo-theologians has come home to roost, and religiously-minded people everywhere are looking at this whole question of Divine Providence with a 'Perhaps,' a 'Why,' a Hesitation, a Lack of Certitude, a Malaise, a Sense of Awkwardness.

A few months ago I received a letter from a friend on the other

ide of the Atlantic, declaring he was 'certain' that our winter eather troubles in this island were a 'judgment' on us for our abour Government, and for our stubborn refusal to accept a orld-war between East and West as inevitable! On the very day received that letter it was reported in *The Times* that an eminent Rabbi in Jerusalem had asserted that our winter troubles were ithout doubt a judgment on us for our action and inaction in alestine! I should add that my friend in Canada sent me with is letter a food-parcel — his heart was better than his head, and e was clearly determined to do what he could to frustrate the judgment' in which he said he believed! So also with my Jewish riends. Some months ago when travelling in a train my neighour, a rigidly orthodox German Rabbi, expounded to me some of he literalist views of the Old Testament which he shared with undamentalist Christians. I asked him, referring to a liberal Rabbi known to me, 'Does Rabbi X believe as you believe?' His nswer was: 'But you can't expect a philosopher to believe as a imple man like me does.' Amusing, certainly. But both experinces, surely, a sad and sorrowful commentary on that disquieting ack of integration of the intellectual, the moral, and the spiritual ubstance of life which is the most significant feature of our times.

Such a disintegration spells lack of essential faith. This is our basic trouble. And if I am reminded that never in human history has there been an adequate integration I would reply that ve are living to-day, not yesterday, and that never in history has here been so conspicuous and general a lack of integration of nind, heart and will as to-day. *There*, surely, lies the urgent, nd primary, task of Christian teachers and preachers.

For *hearts* are at war with *heads*, and so *wills* cannot advance istory. Is there any other way by which integration can be reached han by the full acceptance of, and obedience to, the teaching of esus?

This issue of what we call 'Providence' raises all the deepest uestions which the mind of man has incessantly asked. To-day hese questions are gnawing at all thoughtful minds. The basic ssue is expressed by our word 'God.' 'To whom then will ye iken God?' was the question of the prophet of the exile, and he oured out the vials of his irony on those who fashioned images nd said 'God is like that.' He knew that The Infinite cannot be efined by the finite. Whether our 'graven images which shall not e moved' are in wood or stone or words they express that knowedge 'in part' of which S. Paul so movingly wrote in his first Corinthian epistle.

During a blitz in a northern town a strongly moral but bitte man said to me, pointing to raging inferno and to crowds of stupe fied people struggling wearily along the roads with their bundle of salvaged belongings: 'Well, where is your God now?' Th question which the Psalmist knew so well. I replied as best I coul to the inmost meaning of his question as I understood it: 'He i in the patient fortitude of these people, and in the hearts of thes ambulance workers and firemen — and in the very bitterness o your own mind as you compel me to confront this question.' H looked hard at me, and then said: 'Well, if that is so, the soone you parsons begin rethinking "God" — saying what you reall mean, making people like me *know* what you mean — the bette we shall all be.'

I regard that reply as the articulation of recent spiritual history It is the challenge of the Living God to our human spirits.

'The present,' we have been told (by Mr. Julian Huxley in *Religion without Revelation*, p. 18) 'is a time of clash betwee the idea of Providentialism and the idea of Humanism.' Tw *ideas* are thus set up, by modern positivists or agnostics, like phantom knights in a phantom list. The first idea — that of 'Provi dentialism' — is regarded as a 'vice,' 'an excuse for the poor whom we will always have with us; for the human improvidence which produces whole broods of children without reflection or care as t how they shall live; for not taking action when we are lazy; or, more rarely, for justifying the action we do take when we are energetic.' The second idea — that of 'Humanism' — is regarded as 'human control by human effort in accordance with human ideals.'

But, surely, the clash of *history* is not just the clash of *ideas*. There is something deeper in our souls than *ideas*, though these *ideas* are *one* expression of what is there. The point is that they are expressions of human consciousness confronted by environing reality. When these *ideas* — whatever they are named, 'providentialism,' 'humanism' and what not — are seen by honest men to be inadequate they are amended, purified, sometimes rejected. And what our non-theistic humanists are really rejecting is an inherited *idea*: the idea, namely, that God works without finite agents, or, if you will, without 'second causes': an idea, by the way, which I do not find in the Gospels and which has in every age been *implicitly* repudiated by all who have really *prayed* and *worked* for the Kingdom of God. This deistic idea of an absentee deity who occasionally intervenes has always caused discomfort both to religious and to scientific men, and is now generally suspect, if not widely rejected.

But in rejecting someone's *idea* of 'God' and 'Providence' surely no thoughtful person really thinks he has abolished God! Surely he does not believe that now everything is quite clear to finite minds, and that in conducting an inadequate *idea* of 'God' to the frontiers of knowledge and in thanking this *idea* for its provisional services he is now dispensing with Transcendent Purpose, or with everything other than our human minds! Were that so, the universe might well be conceived as laughing loudly, but with compassion, at so great a folly.

After all our rejections of inadequate *ideas* of 'God' the same questions remain, having merely been given another form. 'Is there or is there not any meaning in anything?' And 'how can we spell out, and further, this meaning?'

My own conviction is that all these rebellions — in so far as they are truthful — have *meaning* for the whole course of human history. Without them men would continue to sleep and there could be no advance. They are a response to the challenge which advancing history makes. It is the *rebellion itself* which is truly meaningful: it is not the inadequate ideas in which the rebellion clothes itself. For the rebellion means that human minds are seeking worthier ideas to express what they see. It has been said of the intellectual rebellions in the history of Christian thought: 'Christianity would long ago have sunk into a noxious superstition, apart from the Levantine and European intellectual movement, sustained from the very beginning until now. This movement is the effort of Reason to provide an accurate system of theology. Indeed, in outlying districts where this effort at rationalization died away, the religion has in fact sunk into the decrepitude of failure' (Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, p. 207). The same principle pierces like a shaft of light universal history.

There is, I believe, a current of deep but obscure Christian thought and feeling flowing in multitudes of human minds to-day. Yet it is unfertile, and uncertain of itself, because it has not yet come to any kind of provisionally coherent and ordered expression.

> Below the surface-stream, shallow and light,
> Of what we *say* we feel — below the stream,
> As light, of what we *think* we feel — there flows
> With noiseless current strong, obscure and deep,
> The central stream of what we feel indeed.

This 'central stream of what we feel indeed' has many expressions. It speaks of its presence in the *malaise* known by every truthful Christian teacher and preacher when what he reads, and says, and sings, contradicts — blatantly or overtly — the spirit, emphasis, and message of Jesus. It speaks in the distress of the

Christian Churchman when the call to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem sends so many into their separate and separating laboratories, conference-halls, even prayer-rooms. It speaks in the self-shame of the scientific thinker when he lays down his 'beliefs' on entering the door of his workshop, to be taken up again on leaving. It speaks in another kind of self-shame, when a positivist's dogmatic and final 'agnosticism' denies that there is any eternal meaning or value in his own disinterested search for *what is there* in the whole universe, or in his passion for freedom and justice.

This 'central stream of what we feel indeed'—such is my own fundamental faith—flows from eternity into time and is God's Word to man to-day. It is a stream which has never, in any age or among any people, been dried up, though it has often seemed to be lost in the deserts of Time and Sense. Through the prophets of Israel it flowed historically into the soul of Jesus the Christ, and thereafter became a life-giving stream. *He* came 'in the fulness of the times' to fulfil the times. That is why this 'central stream of what we feel indeed' is both historically and eternally related to Him.

But some tell us—and, curiously enough, both exponents of 'dialectical theology' and exponents of 'dialectical materialism'—that all this is just 'mere subjectivism.' Both these varieties of negation say, in the words of Thoas in Goethe's *Iphigenia in Tauris*:

> 'Tis not a god, 'tis thine own heart that speaks.'

To which in every age those of essential faith reply in the words of Iphigenia:

> 'Tis only through our hearts the gods can speak to us.'

You will, of course, remember that this charge of 'mere subjectivism' was levelled against Jesus Himself by His religious opponents. His reply was, in different words, always the same—to appeal to the Truth written on their hearts, minds, and wills. Truth that has been written over, like some palimpsest, but yet there: Truth that needs to be reborn, but capable of rebirth. So I will not go over the old old controversy, which every thoughtful man must face for himself, about 'Subject' and 'Object,' about 'Authority' and 'Freedom,' about 'Revelation' and 'Discovery.' It is sufficient here to say, in a poet's unblinkered, if misunderstandable, words:

> Were not the eye itself a sun,
> No sun for it could ever shine:
> By nothing godlike could the heart be won,
> Were not the heart itself divine.

The Word became flesh over nineteen centuries ago, in Him who expressed by lip and life the moral meaning of history, its

piritual Source and Goal : in Him who by His obedience liberated ie Power for its continuing incarnation in all His true disciples.

Such is our faith, which in these days has to be seen against ie whole background of our new knowledge of Nature and of Human History.

First, Nature. The French mocking prophet of the eighteenth entury said to the orthodox 'optimists,' and also to the materialistic pessimists' of his day : 'Physicists have become the heralds of rovidence. A catechist may announce God to children, but a Newton demonstrates Him to philosophers.' If by 'demonstrates Him' we mean, not 'proves the Infinite,' but 'reveals *the mode* f His activity,' we might truthfully say the same to-day of every cientific discoverer in every realm—of a Pasteur, of a Darwin, f a Madame Curie, of a Rutherford, and of a thousand more.

For what we call 'Science' is just the result of the endeavour f man to know *what is there*, and of *how* things have come to be. his very endeavour postulates *a faith* that by our knowledge we re in touch with something real and this very search for knowledge s a faith in *Order.*

This faith is, in truth, inescapable, as inescapable as the uni- erse of which I form a part, as inescapable as the requirements f my own mental nature. For—to use Bacon's familiar words—I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend and the Talmud nd the Alcoran than that this universal frame is without a mind. Certainly a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but epth in philosophy bringeth men about to religion, for when the ind of man looketh upon secondary causes scattered it resteth in hem, but when it beholdeth them confederate and knit together it lieth to Providence and Deity.' That is, when man beholds the nity, the confraternity, of all created things he is beholding God s in a mirror. I have no doubt that this is what Voltaire, the mock- ng prophet—and mocking because he was trying to rouse from heir dogmatic slumber the light-minded both of the left and of he right in his day—said when, in reply to the query, why should ne believe in God, answered, 'Open your eyes.' That is, There's omething there, isn't there? Look at it, and look at the whole. Clearly, he was in the succession of Jesus who said, 'Blessed are ie pure in heart, for they shall see God.' As was also Hermann Melville when he said, 'Moles and bats alone should be sceptics; nd the final infidelity is for a live man to vote himself dead.'

> What is all science then
> But pure religion, seeking everywhere
> The true commandments, and through many forms
> The eternal Power that binds all worlds in one?

Is then Providence revealed in Nature? Very briefly—having spoken of the basic issue, which is one of presuppositions—a few pertinent points may be made.

The story which Science unfolds in this unfathomable Nature is one of an onward and upward movement. From nebular fire-mist to uncountable suns, and to our own 'coagulated drop' of one of these suns, and to living creatures, and to man. In spite of every set-back there has been the upward movement. Who can consider this universal process without reaching the irresistible conclusion that it is indwelt with Purposive and Transcendent Mind? I cannot.

This conviction, I may be reminded, is 'anthropomorphic.' It is. Can any conviction be other? Even a so-called 'cosmo-morphic view is *man's* view. So, whatever be the story of evolution, here is man. 'The diapason closes full on him.' The meaning of the process is revealed in the goal reached. In other words, the oak explains the acorn—a much deeper truth than that the acorn explains the oak. 'In the deepest sense it is as true as ever it was held to be, that the world was made for man, and that the bringing forth in him of those qualities which we call highest and holiest is the final cause of creation' (Fiske, *Idea of God*, Pref. 21). Man is most fully man as he lives in accord with the highest and holiest qualities of his being. Thus the underlying structure of the universe is revealed. Thus the end of God in the whole creative process is adumbrated. 'It is indeed a mysterious universe that we inhabit, and not the least mysterious are those mysterious beings thrown up from the primeval slime and now turning their telescopes on the fretted vault of heaven' (*The Times*, Nov. 5, 1930). And, I would add, now applying their tools to what they call the 'atom.'

I do not launch here on the tempestuous seas of the 'problem' of Miracle,' having already expressed in a few words my own point of view—which, I may add, is kindred to that of *some* of the reporters in *Doctrine in the Church of England*. Suffice it here to say that in the faith of our Lord the three basic and inter-related speculative problems which are always gnawing at speculative

[1] It is felt by many that miracle has a special value, in that it is a striking demonstration of the subordination of the natural order to spiritual ends, and affords particular points at which God's activity is manifested with special clarity and directness. On the other hand, it is to be recognized that many others feel it to be more congruous with the wisdom and majesty of God that the regularities, such as men of science observe in nature and call Laws of Nature, should serve His purpose without any need for exceptions on the physical plane. It is important to notice that the motives leading to this view are not exclusively scientific, but that a religious interest also is involved.'

minds, and now once again biting at them furiously — Miracle, Evil, and Providence—were unfolded and transcended, as in His action and by His prayer they were answered and 'solved'—that is, reached the only solution possible to those who dwell in time and place. For faith and action are one, not two.

In the life and teaching of Jesus 'Providence' represents a life to be lived, not a speculative problem to be solved. So also, 'Evil' is a foe to be fought, not a tortured hypothesis of its metaphysical origination. So also, our unhappy and confusing word 'Miracle' speaks of a realm of spiritual reality to be won by trust and obedience, not a theoretical division of the universe into a God-forsaken 'Nature' and a God-interfering 'Supernature,' not a scientific 'proof' that the God who customarily does nothing is now doing something. So also, 'Revelation' is the Meaning of all history, not the record of partial history.

Second, Human History. I have said of the history of this planet that 'the diapason closes full on man.' Here he is after unchartable generations. Not yet has he destroyed his species. Will he yet do so? We do not know. But even if, *me genoito*, he finds the whole lesson of human history too difficult for him to learn and brings to an untimely end both his terrestrial habitation and his own material existence, elsewhere and otherwise the work will continue.

My own opinion here is that he *will* learn the lesson. Fear will teach him: coupled with love. But this is an opinion. And I do not build my faith on such. And, in any case, the things which are seen, the planet included, are temporal.

Still, it is an opinion buttressed by what we know of human history. As we try to understand that history we cannot but ask ourselves the question: Why is it that the human race has not yet exterminated itself by its follies and its sins? One answer is that a 'corrective principle' can be discerned running throughout history. Or, to use the language of our most distinguished philosophic historian, to each 'challenge' there has come the appropriate 'response.' Or, to use the language of a philosophic statesman, the 'holistic principle' has been throughout operative. Or, to use the language of a mathematical philosopher, there has been, throughout, a 'principle of concretion.' Or, to use the language of Jesus Himself, 'My Father worketh continuously until now.'

To my own view a 'principle' means nothing without its embodiment in what we call a 'person.' The 'principle of concretion' is to Jesus 'Father.' Shall I say that the 'principle' is rather one of *concreation*. History itself is Creation, Con-Creation, Re-Creation. You have no doubt heard of Alphonso,

king of Castille, who regretted that he was not present at th creation, for he would have given such excellent advice. H seemed to forget two important points: first, that he was indee present at a creative moment of history; and, second, that he wa here not to give advice but to act.

The progress of Providence is to be won. Its meaning is in separable from the dynamic faith and action of all self-spendin children of the dawn and fighters for God's ampler day. Th 'response' to the 'challenge' of each historical situation is neve automatic, mechanical: it is moral and spiritual, and, therefore personal. What we call 'faith' in God is a dynamic 'Yea' to Hi *whole* evolutionary creative process. Not just 'Yea' to a *smal bit* of that process — the bit that put me here, you there, in thi nation, in that institution. 'Yea' to *the whole* of it, in its Source its Method, its Goal. So that we, in this small segment of tim and place, become the channels, the ministers, of its enlarging and increasing purposes. 'Yea' to the conditions imposed upo our affirmations by our finitude — 'we know in part': and a 'Nay to all spurious 'certainties' and 'finalities' — 'he sees not clear liest who sees all things clear.'

All overweening speculative dogmatism is a 'Nay' to the knowledge and furtherance of Truth. All sectarianism is an ob stacle to the will of the One Divine Father. All self-centred egotism is a 'Nay' to His Kingdom.

In Jesus Christ, wrote St. Paul in another context, is the Yea. 'Yea' to the purpose of God in and through all human history. 'Yea' to the terrible redemptive demand made on Him in the wilderness, at Caesarea Philippi, on Mount Hermon, in the Gar den of Gethsemane, on the Cross. Which also meant 'Nay' to all false allies — Zealotry, Pharisaicism, Sacerdotalism. 'Nay' to the tribal and national monolatry of His day. 'Nay' to the blinding and enfeebling particularism of Race and Place, of Book and System. 'Nay' to all partial loyalties and to all inherited separations. 'Yea' to the full, integrated four-square Love of God, and 'Yea' to its application to the whole field of human need, unrestricted by animal ancestry, geographical location, ecclesiastical allegiance. 'Yea' to the necessity for radical re pentance, Rebirth from Above, the Way of the Cross.' 'Nay' to Death. 'Yea' to Life.

Thus there are two principles which, to our finite understand ing of human history, are indispensable to the progress of Provi dence, or, if you prefer, as I do, the language of the Gospels, to the coming of the Kingdom of God. First, *solidarity* or *whole ness*, or *unity*: and second, *sacrifice*. 'The two pillars on which

ny doctrine of providence must ultimately rest': but 'pillars,' lease, not 'pillows.'

These two principles are revealed throughout all human his- ory as known to us: and only *revealed* as they have become *ncarnate*. They are the creative expressions in time of The ternal Word: the darkness of isolation and self has never mas- ered them. They became fully incarnate in Him who lived, ught and prayed 'that they may be one': and who said, by lip nd by life, 'Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die abideth by itself alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.'

Neither of these twin principles can support any 'Doctrine of rovidence' without the other. That is, no one can further unity, olidarity, wholeness, who is not himself unified, integrated, re- orn. This is the hardest of all doctrines, in comparison therewith reeds of speculative affirmation or of speculative negation are easy ndeed. For this is more than a doctrine: it is a life.

Our Lord's doctrine of Providence is seen in the life He lived. t is, therefore, not by accident, chance, or lack of meaning, that have linked the question of 'Providence' with the question of being a Christian.' To be a Christian does not mean that we laim to understand all mysteries and all knowledge: that we pre- end to 'define' God, or to systematize what we call 'theology' r 'doctrine' into a final body of speculative truth. History itself eaches us that it is the repudiators of these irreverent claims who ave furthered the Kingdom of God, which is the Kingdom of Truth, and Justice, and Love.

It is the Cross of Calvary which symbolizes the final meaning f the whole human story. And it does so because it is indwelt by ne unifying and redeeming purpose and grace of the Living God ncarnate in Jesus Christ. That redemptive activity, eternal in the ery nature of God, tabernacled among us when Perfect Morality as wedded to Perfect Spirituality in Jesus Christ.

And the whole creation, groaning and travailing in pain to- ether until now, is still waiting for the manifestation of the sons f God.

THE SCHEME OF SALVATION

By the Rev. Canon J. S. Bezzant, Chancellor of Liverpool Cathedral.

SALVATION is our highest well-being: it involves being saved from whatever may prevent or hinder attainment to eternal blessedness. What was known as the scheme of salvation was based on Holy Scripture regarded as the verbally inspired record of Divine revelation; and the scheme as a whole, but by no means all included in it, stands or falls with that view of the Bible. The Pauline teaching on sin and salvation was elaborated into a scheme containing elements of Aristotelian science and the theology of St. Augustine. It began with the rebellion of Satan in which angels fell. By direct acts of God, Adam and Eve were created, apparently as adults, not only innocent but fully righteous. Their descendants were intended to restore the number of the angels depleted by the heavenly revolt. Moved by envy, Satan persuaded our first parents to disobey one absolute command of God and so brought about their fall from original righteousness in consequence of which they transmitted to all their offspring, by natural generation, a corrupted nature, an enfeebled will, and also the guilt of their sin. Thus all mankind lay under the curse of sin both original and actual, justly the object of Divine wrath and destined to damnation. In order to realize His thwarted purpose God sent His Son who, assuming human nature, was born on earth, whereon was wrought the drama of His death and resurrection. Jesus, pure from all defect of original and actual sin, alone fulfilled the conditions of a perfect sacrifice for human sin. By this God's legitimate anger with guilty mankind was appeased and His honour satisfied; He was graciously pleased to accept His Son's sacrifice, enabled to forgive sin, and man was potentially redeemed. The Christian Church, a divine corporation, came into being; those baptized into it who by grace persevered in the fulfilment of its commands would be secure in the life to come. From the supernatural life of the Church, the world and history derived their only meaning and would at a last day perish by fire. This would happen when the unknown number of souls required to replace the fallen angels was complete.[1] The dead would be raised

[1] The Prayer-book office for The Burial of the Dead still prays that God may be pleased shortly to accomplish the number of the elect and to hasten His kingdom.

from their graves in their bodies; the saved were predestined to their salvation by an inscrutable decree of God, not for any merits of their own but solely for those of Christ; as to the fate of the rest, there was some difference of opinion, but it was generally held that they would suffer endless torment in the flames of hell, by which climax God's power and justice would be finally vindicated and heaven's bliss intensified.

This outline has been so shattered that the bare recital of it has the aspect of a malicious travesty. The demolition squad has done its work. Known facts of astronomy, geology, biological evolution, anthropology, the comparative study of religions, race and genetic psychology, the literary and historical criticism of the Bible, with the gospel of Jesus and the moral conscience of mankind have banished this scheme beyond the range of credibility.[2] But though the scheme, as such, can no longer be taken seriously, certain doctrines vital in the Christian gospel of salvation are still taught in forms which derive from the vanished scheme, and this hinders the effective presentation of the gospel to-day.

Salvation is abiding blessedness; but salvation as the process by which that end may be reached has no meaning unless we know what it is from which men need to be saved. For Jesus, salvation[3] consisted in being saved from the outer darkness of exclusion from the Kingship or Realm of God, and repentance would bring that salvation. For St. Paul, it consisted in being saved from sin and death by faith and all that faith implied: through faith the power which raised Christ from the dead would raise us also to newness of life. For the later Church, salvation was popularly understood to mean being saved from everlasting punishment in hell; the way of escape was Divine grace mediated by sacraments. The Reformers accepted this meaning of salvation but short-circuited the procedure by substituting for saving sacraments a saving faith in the efficacy of the death of Christ. This latter conception of what man needs to be saved from cannot be commended to-day; it is foreign to any possible conception of God and will not again grip the minds of men. The things from which people feel they need to be saved are worry, loneliness, weakness, ineffectiveness, a sense of frustration and that they are of no importance, sickness, selfish-

[2] We may note that practically nothing of this scheme is necessarily implied by the Catholic creeds; but it is not always the most authoritative formularies which exercise the greatest influence. Our own Church has never had a formal dogma of the verbal inspiration of the Bible, but no doctrine has had so deep an influence upon the religious thought of our people.

[3] *Luke* xix, 9, 'To-day is salvation come to this house,' is the only instance of our Lord's use of the word salvation.

ness, ignorance, ugliness, lack of faith in life and a consequent sense of its futility, and their poverty of spirit. These manifold needs can be roughly but not misleadingly said to mean that men need to be saved from themselves. Some of these needs arise inevitably in the conditions of finite human life which are not to be done away; salvation from them can be achieved only through a courage and strength to face and overcome them. Those that go deepest can be traced to one root—human sin and its consequences. The doctrine of salvation must therefore be correlative with the doctrine of sin; and one great change, made inevitable by empirical knowledge, in the doctrine of sin necessarily involves changes in the old language about salvation.

The doctrine of sin would seem to be the despair of readers of English theology. Ambiguity, confusion, palpable misuse of words, permeate it; and are made worse by the professed acceptance of the facts of man's evolutionary origin and moral development while the inevitable and plain implications are evaded, obscured and ignored.[4]

The word sin belongs to the language of religion and is strictly applicable only to what is capable of moral valuation. To sin, a person must, at the time of the act called a sin, be aware of a standard and of its just claim upon his obedience which he nevertheless wills to disobey; or which, if his action falls short of the standard otherwise than by his conscious and deliberate choice, he yet knows he could and ought to have known and chosen to obey.[5] From the standpoint of people with knowledge of a higher standard, actions done by those knowing only a lower standard are, if judged by the higher standard, imperfect, defective or wrong actions, but they are not *sins*. From the Christian standpoint nothing can be sin for which a person is not responsible and justly accountable, and therefore guilty in the sight of God from whom

[4] As long ago as the decade 1902-12, Dr. F. R. Tennant published three volumes on the doctrine of sin: *The Origin and Propagation of Sin*, *The Sources of the Doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin*, and *The Concept of Sin*. They have been almost universally praised, criticized only in details, and then practically ignored.

[5] Infants therefore cannot sin; they, and persons unavoidably ignorant of Christian standards, cannot *sin* in falling short of Christian standards. They are erroneously said to do so when their actions are called sins or sinful by those who know Christian standards and pass judgment in the light thereof. If such judgment be not erroneous then vermin and volcanoes may be said to sin. Similarly, a man who comes to see himself in the light of Christ knows he is a sinner; he often concludes that he was always a sinner *in the same sense* before he 'saw the light.' Such a conclusion is not a direct experience but fallacious inference from a new experience. Rhetorical exaggeration is not a sound basis for doctrine.

lo secrets are hid. In other words, what theologians call actual sin l alone properly to be called sin at all.[6] If in the light of modern nowledge 'sin' is applied to anything else, even if, to mark some ifference, 'sin' is qualified by the word 'original' or 'birth,' nguage is misused and ambiguity is introduced where clear neaning is vital. The doctrine of original sin did not simply tate facts of experience: it purported to explain their origin by neories which were held to make us accountable for them and uilty of them. Even on its own assumptions it failed as an ex- lanation; for in a being created not merely innocent in the sense f non-moral, but *righteous*, the fact that temptation could gain urchase and seductive power to determine the will to sin,[7] pre- upposes as already existing precisely that weakness of will which, n us, the original sin was held to explain.

Modern knowledge of human origins rests upon empirical facts. The Biblical account of them is mythical — an attempt to explain acts and experiences when the knowledge requisite for a true ccount was not available. Mythology cannot be a *basis* for true doctrine; and so far as inferences from facts and real experience re set forth in language derived from mythology they are likely lo be inadequate and misleading.

The evolutionary account of man's origin and development eally does affect the traditional anthropology and soteriology. Man has an ancestry, sub-human and, further back, animal. The ong line had many stages. When, already ruled by natural in- tincts, immensely strong because necessary for survival, man's lim power of reasoning was sufficiently developed, capacity for noral life emerged into its primitive actuality and an awareness of spiritual environment beyond himself and his fellows to which ie felt mysteriously akin;[8] and so able, as we should now say, by he grace of God or the Holy Spirit active in the world and in himself, to obey and co-operate with the Divine commands and purposes as his primitive mind conceived them or to disobey and n a measure hinder them.

Thus there never was a state of original righteousness. The nner conflict and struggle between instincts, impulses, appetites

[6] To talk of unconscious, unintentional or involuntary *sin* is as meaning- ess as it would be to talk of blue, hungry or even untrue *truth*.

[7] Wherever the term 'will' is used, *the act of a person willing* is to be understood.

[8] We can but use modern language to indicate experiences of primitive man not recoverable by modern civilized man; it is not implied that early man consciously perceived them as we describe them.

and passions on the one hand and the awakening moral conscienc on the other, so far from resulting from any sin, was the essentia condition of the birth both of goodness and of sin.[9] The instincts impulses, appetites and passions of man are not *in themselve* sinful or capable of moral valuation. They were and are essentia to the life, maintenance and growth of the human race; they ar no evidence of any Fall, derangement or disease of man's natur but belong to him as God was pleased to make him. Those who in the light of our knowledge, still regard the facts as contrary t God's will and as requiring further explanation, are by implicatio criticizing God's choice of the evolutionary method.[10] The fact i that the only God of Whom we can have knowledge that is no baseless is the God who has so wrought; and there neither is no can be any knowledge that the world and man's origin therei might or ought to have been other than they have been, except fo conscious human sin and its consequences. The doctrine of salva tion is concerned with God's graciousness and mercy, not wit criticisms of the methods by which He has made us. If evolutio presents difficulties about the goodness of God they are problem of Theodicy, not difficulties about the actual origin and nature o sin;[11] and they are not to be solved by denying the facts of ou origin and their implications.[12]

The most persistent error arises from failure to distinguish in stincts, impulses, appetites and passions from the actions of the will in dealing with them. In themselves they are but incentives t action, sources of motives; they are the materials from which only personal, intentional willing can make either virtues or vices. The *willing* is the action calling for approval or condemnation. The propensities we share in common with the animals are deeply

[9] This remains true if what is distinguished as the soul or spirit of ma does or does not arise from within the evolutionary process; if it results fro a direct, creative act of God at a particular stage in that process or whethe it is infused by God in each individual at, or at any time after, conception, i all events alike our natural propensities are the result of our evolution an form the soul's inheritance.

[10] It was perhaps unfortunate that the Creator did not have the benefit o their advice.

[11] Inasmuch as faulty inference and *a priori* philosophy can and do produce a 'consciousness of sin' where actual sin is not to be attributed, it follows that 'the sense of sin' can be misleading if made the sole basis for the doctrine of sin.

[12] Responsibility for the possibility—the late Dr. Temple held 'for the practical inevitability'—of moral evil and for the opportunities for its actualization is God's: responsibility for its actuality rests with man.

boted in the human race and are the source of many temptations;[13] but except as by our past sins we have increased their tensity and weakened our power of willing, we are in no wise sponsible for the fact that we have bodily and mental processes hich entice the will to act in ways which conscience condemns. s Dr. Tennant summarizes it:

> 'Man is conscious before he is self-conscious, impulsive and appetitive before he is volitional, and volitional before he is moralized. Irrational impulse and cognitive springs of conduct are often at variance, so that the moral being is impelled in two directions.'

s St. Paul said with another meaning, 'that is not first which is piritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual.' his is the origin of sin and of moral goodness.

There is no hint that Jesus regarded the origin of sin as ysterious; it is not mysterious.[14] There can be no other *cause* of n than free choice; and if we find any other explanation of sin we nereby remove our responsibility and guilt for it and so destroy ne ground of its moral wickedness and religious condemnation.

It is profoundly true and important that individual sin and esponsibility beget social sin and its responsibility. Our personlity grows in membership of society and thus, in regard to sin as o all else, an isolated *person* does not exist. But it is, I think, nisleading to speak of a common or social mind in the same sense s we speak of an individual mind. That which is *thought* may be ommon to a society, but neither the thinkers nor their thinking re an unity, and when we so speak of them we use metaphor. ocial sin is resolvable into individual sins; but the influences of he social environment, its moral 'atmosphere,' our social inheritnce, in a word our nurture, are the most potent factor, long before ve reach adult moral stature, in what is called the universality of in. It is in this way only, and not by our inheritance of the non-

[13] Temptation, except as we dally with it or deliberately or carelessly tempt others, is not action: the activity is the tempted will resulting in action. Temptation, however strong, is neither sin nor the cause of sin. And if the will intends to sin, and anything external to the will thwarts the intention rom issuing in action, the intention is, as Jesus taught, as sinful as the action would be.

[14] Sin is sometimes said to be inexplicable because it is irrational. The tatement derives its plausibility from the use of the word 'irrational.' Sin is rrational in the sense that it is against moral reason and therefore foolish as vell as evil; but that does not mean it cannot be understood. To strike a man n anger is irrational in the sense that the action results from irrational impulse and not from rational decision; but that does not mean it is inexplicable n the sense that a rational account of it cannot be given.

moral raw material of sin, that sin is propagated in the race.[15]

No doctrine of inherited sinfulness and guilt can be extracted from the words of Jesus. The idea remains with us because St. Paul's description of the scheme of salvation seems to require it. The only passage is *Romans* v, 12-21, to which there is a passing reference in *I Corinthians* xv, 22. Nothing else in the New Testament suggests this view of the consequences of the first man's sin.[16] Even here St. Paul is not primarily concerned to explain the origin of sin and death.[17] His words are incidental and illustrative in expounding how men in Christ are made righteous and are to rise from the dead; and the argument is obscurely expressed. The human race is regarded as summed up in the first Adam and similarly in the second. In this way they share the first Adam's sin and in the same way there is a summary making righteous through the second Adam, in whom all shall be made alive. How this can be

[15] Herein is part of the importance of the Church and its potentiality in assisting salvation from sin and its consequences. If the 'redeemed community' were more an actuality as well as the much-talked-of ideal of the Church, baptism as the means of incorporation in that community would more really and plainly signify entry upon a new life; while such a Christian Church would be an effective counter-power against the propagation of sin in society outside the Church. Even as things are it is only unreason and the remains of the superstitions of inherited sinfulness and of the total corruption of man's nature that can allow anyone to deny or ignore the reality of human goodness and its influence. We can speak truly of a bias or pull to evil in human nature only if we at once counter-balance it by recognizing a bias or pull to good. Were it not so morality would never have existed. Repentance and reconciliation are always the return of sons to their Father and to His family. It is also old and sound doctrine that God is always present with every human soul: all that is true and good comes to man through the eternal Word. The Gospel of redemption is a Gospel of renewal. The 'new creation' indicates the intense reality of the change, particularly in the 'twice-born' such as St. Paul and St. Augustine; but it is not *another creature*. The controversy whether grace or our own effort comes first is an unreal one, because to be totally outside the Creator's grace is a condition in which man never is.

[16] *Ephesians* ii, 3, 'and were by nature the children of wrath,' since St. Augustine has generally been taken to refer to original sin; but the arguments against this exegesis are decisive. See, *e.g.*, T. K. Abbott in the *International Critical Commentary*; Armitage Robinson's *Ephesians*, pp. 50-51; and N. P. Williams's *The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin*, pp. 113 n. and 379.

[17] That death came into the world as the result of sin is an erroneous speculation. Death has its properly natural aspect and there is no reason to suppose that we were ever built for physical permanence. The universal primitive refusal to accept death as the final end of such a creature as man can be accounted for; we may perhaps also see in it an instinctive groping towards the truth of immortality and eternal life which the Gospel brought to light; but it carries no implication that physical death is or ever was contrary to the Divine intention, as St. Paul thought.

St. Paul does not explain, nor is it capable of intelligible ex-anation.[18] It is said that the Son of God took our nature upon im; but 'human nature,' apart from individual persons, is not an tuality of being but an abstraction of thought. There is no such ing as 'human nature as a whole' that could be assumed by hrist in such wise as to justify St. Paul's argument.[19] 'If one ed for all, then all died,' is mystical language which was literal-ed and pressed beyond any verification or meaning. If it be held at in baptism all that happened to Christ happens to those ptized into Him, then the baptized have already died in Christ d have paid the supposed penalty demanded for sin. The whole oning transaction is over and our responsibility discharged. That contrary to moral experience. Nothing now obliges us to look

[18] St. Augustine tried to give it meaning and to justify original guilt by e idea of the seminal presence in Adam of all his descendants. If any mean-g at all can be given to one sin involving all future sins, Adam was guilty all future sins, not his offspring guilty of his. The actual *sharing* by his scendants in the sin of one logically implies that on every man rests the ad of sin of all his ancestors and that the guilt of the whole race is borne the last man, not by the first.

[19] 'The universal "humanity" is supposed to have a concrete existence so dependent of its individual manifestations that the "universal" can be edited with the guilt of one of its particulars and can endure the punish-ent which all but one of its particulars do not endure, and yet to be so far separable from those manifestations that the endurance of the penalty can evertheless be credited to each and every particular. It is clear we cannot ave it both ways. If the universal is so real and independent that it can be nished without each particular being punished, it cannot also be true that ch a punishment endured by the universal can imply and involve its en-rance by each and every particular: no juggling with universals will make true to say that an individual who has in point of fact not been punished ay nevertheless be deemed to have been punished. It is a logical fallacy to old that everything which is true of one particular is true of each; while as the theory that Christ is Himself "the universal of humanity" and not erely a particular man, that is surely a form of words to which no intelligible eaning can be attached. A particular man cannot also *be* a universal. If it e said frankly that Jesus was not a particular man at all, but merely a Person whom a generic "humanity" was united with Divinity, that theory, I enture to say, no matter how strong the authority for it, is one which, if it eant anything at all, would be inconsistent with the recognition, in any in-lligible sense, of the real humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (Rashdall, *he Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*, pp. 424 f.) This abuse of the ncient doctrine of universals and particulars is responsible for other deriva-ve notions which allow the actions of God with man to be spoken of in rms other than those alone proper to a personal relationship; they then ster subsidiary superstitions which in popular religion come to count for ore than the sublimities of Christianity, *e.g.* the quasi-materialistic language ften used about sacraments and the operations of grace.

for definitive knowledge in an uncritical acceptance of St. Paul's words and inferences from them.[20]

It is sometimes said that man alone in all creation chooses what he knows will be to his own hurt and that a fact so astonishing proves the deep-seated derangement of his nature. The fact is not astonishing if we remember that man is the only being in creation *capable* of such choice. The strength of the entirely non-moral instincts, impulses, appetites and passions often blinds man in his choices, so that what appears as 'desirable' to some end wrongly perceived or chosen usurps the place of the true good, when it is not his real good. To attribute this to 'original sin' is to identify sin with finitude. Jesus regarded sinners as like sheep gone astray, as lost or blind; and this is most true precisely when the sinner thinks he knows full well what he is doing. If the light within is darkness, how great is the darkness! The most complete blindness is often that which says, 'We see.'

Not only original guilt but also the idea of original sin can be discarded without loss to religion and with gain in truth.[21] The retention of them and of language alone appropriate to them confuses and misleads. Our XXXIX Articles are restrained in com-

[20] St. Paul's words in *Romans* v had little influence in the early Church; in the Eastern fathers the doctrine of sin was based on facts of experience and showing a congenital weakness in human nature. In the middle of the third century Cyprian, while sharing St. Paul's belief that death entered the world through sin, denies that an infant has sin. (*Ep.* 64.) The words 'original sin,' often accorded the sanctity of Divine revelation, were first used by St. Augustine. (*Ad Simplicianum,* i, 1.) He it was who developed Pauline language in a rigid scheme and first insisted on inherited guilt and a penalty to be paid. Pelagius's appeal to tradition was natural and largely justified. It is often overlooked that Pelagius had this excuse for his doctrine, grievously inadequate though it is, that it was provoked by what seemed to him St. Augustine's absurd denial that man had any part in working out his salvation. At some points St. Augustine and Pelagius were using words at cross-purposes; and in any case the two were temperamentally and by past experience so different that it was not surprising that the controversy was pushed to extremes on *both* sides.

[21] The revival of the baseless speculation of a premundane Fall in the late Dr. N. P. Williams's Bampton Lectures, a doctrine which he thought necessary to ease the problems of Theodicy rather than to account for the origin of actual *sin,* should not be allowed to obscure the fact that so orthodox and learned a theologian has shown once again that the 'original righteousness' involved in the idea of original sin is not justifiable, and that a transmitted and original guilt is unreasonable and immoral. He agrees with the Greek fathers that the first human creatures were imperfect, undeveloped, infantile beings with the powers of self-consciousness and self-determination, which were the starting-point for upward development.

rison with other Protestant statements,[22] but explicitly say that an is displeasing to God because of a hereditary bias or corruption of his nature, identified with concupiscence or the animal propensities in us, and that this is sin deserving of God's wrath.[23] It indefensible that a Canon proposed in 1947 should attempt to nd this language upon us as 'agreeable to the Word of God' d say that it 'may be subscribed unto with a good conscience'; d that every time a clerk enters into a new benefice he should be quired to read it publicly to the congregation.

Language in the Baptismal Office is in accordance with the rticles, and is also due to the incongruity of transferring New estament language about the baptism of adults to that of infants. amounts to self-contradiction. All are born in sin and need remission of sin in baptism, yet the exposition of the Gospel refers unbaptized infants whose innocency all men are to follow. In e 1928 revision we pray that infants 'may receive remission of n' and speak of them as 'being washed from sin'—language hich is meaningless unless the sin is original or birth sin, which not sin at all. In this revision a human and unnecessary doctrine as been made more consistent by preferring it to the reference to e words of Jesus, cutting out 'how he exhorteth all men to llow their innocency.'[24]

[22] Christ truly suffered . . . 'to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, ut also for all actual sins of men.' (Art. II.) Original sin 'is the fault and rruption of the Nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the ffspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, nd is of his own nature inclined to evil, . . . it deserveth God's wrath and amnation.' (Art. IX.) 'Works done before the grace of Christ, and the Inpiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, . . . for that they are not done s God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they ave the nature of sin.' (Art. XIII.) Predestination was 'to deliver from urse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind.' Art. XVII.) If all were predestined either to life or to death, nothing wrought y Christ can *add* one to the number of the saved, nor can any degree of moral ffort.

[23] The Roman doctrine, though in many respects irreconcilable with knowdge, is on this point less unreasonable. By Adam's fall man lost a gift of upernatural grace by which he could have remained without sin; but conupiscence, which as a consequence belongs to man's nature, is said to be *not* f the nature of sin. Sin is thus properly confined to conduct issuing from olition.

[24] 'All men are from their birth prone to sin.' In the sense in which this true, men are equally prone to it after baptism, and the words are futile as reason for baptism. St. Augustine was guilty of an obvious *petitio principii* arguing back from his belief in the effects of baptism: baptism effects emission of sin; infants have not committed actual sin; therefore in infants nly original sin can be remitted and therefore all are conceived and born uilty in sin!

It is commonly alleged against a form of Christianity which dispenses with the language of original sin that its conception of sin is superficial and deficient and that it eviscerates the Christian doctrine of salvation. The facts as we know them afford no ground for superficiality or easy optimism about sin.[25] What experience and modern knowledge show to be true in Pelagianism is required for true moral responsibility: what is false in Pelagianism is more plainly false from the outlook of modern knowledge.[26] Pelagius was right in holding that if man had not free will he was a puppet and could not be truly responsible, and equally right in thinking that when man sinned it was not because of inherited *sin* but in failing to do right:

> 'His vigorous safeguarding of the inalienable rights and responsibilities of personality . . . was a contribution to the Christian doctrine of sin with which no age can dare to tamper with impunity.'[27]

Pelagius was seriously wrong in exaggerating the power of free will and ludicrously wrong in minimizing the power of sinful habit and the reality and terrible power of social solidarity in sin. St. Augustine saw where Pelagius was wrong, but his defective knowledge and philosophy led him, from the standpoint of our knowledge and the freedom from Biblical literalism now possible, to misrepresent the truths which he saw and so thoroughly grasped.

In a recent book dealing with the relevance of Christianity to man's need of salvation it is said that there is in men

> 'by virtue of their human and finite nature, a fundamental egoism which impels them to value the lower rather than the higher satisfactions of

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[25] The frequent charge that liberal theology means no more by sin than the survival of the ape, tiger and primitive donkey in us, which in due course will be eliminated by education and improved natural and social environment, is a gross misrepresentation and only shows that it is useful to pervert and parody arguments when otherwise they are unanswerable. To hold that that only is sin which is the transgression of a standard known and understood to have a claim upon man, does nothing at all to reduce its exceeding sinfulness for us, for whom it is a wilful grieving of the Holy Spirit.

[26] The general beliefs of his day were partly responsible for leading Pelagius astray. His denial of the Fall was the result of his premise that man was not in absolute need of Divine grace, since man could, if he wished, of his own free will turn and come to God. Modern denial of the Fall *because there is no evidence for it* does not, as Dr. Tennant pointed out, involve the deduction of the Pelagian premise that man does not need Divine grace. In deploring moral laxity excusing itself on the plea of the weakness of human nature, and in desiring to deepen the sense of moral responsibility, Pelagius's protests were as necessary in his time as they are to-day.

[27] F. R. Tennant, *The Origin and Propagation of Sin*, p. 14.

life, themselves rather than their fellow-men, mankind rather than God.'[28]

ow as we have seen, the 'fundamental egoism which impels em,' except as it is accepted and chosen by the will to do the ings to which it impels, is neither sin nor a derangement of man nature. Ignorance and folly are often not sin; but that fact oes not prevent them from having results as serious as, and some-mes more immediately serious than, the consequences of sin.[29] he words I have quoted are but part of the truth: if they were ie whole of it we should not know it: God would never have een known and worshipped, morality would not have emerged nd survived, and human life would have perished in anarchy. evertheless the quotation does state, if with familiar exaggera-on, the fact from which issues sin and its consequences, which e most of the things from which men need to be saved. The self-ssertion that can and so easily does result in sin is necessary in ie world as it has been and is, if man is to maintain himself and chieve anything. Sin issues *from its wrong direction and use*: lvation consists in its becoming inspired, directed and con-olled in accord with the will of God.

To say there is anything in man which perverts *all* human ctions, *always* directs reason to the wrong objectives and thus rogressively leads men only further and further from God, is lse and fantastic. If it were not false, total corruption in which ere could be neither sin nor consciousness of sin and responsi-ility would long ago have been the result.[30] It is not *only* the

[28] *The Christian Answer*, p. 115. St. Paul puts it thus: 'going about to tablish their own righteousness, (men) have not submitted themselves unto ie righteousness of God.' He says they did this 'being ignorant of God's ghteousness'; and so long as such ignorance was unavoidable the failure submit to the Divine righteousness was not *sin*, however disastrous the nsequences.

[29] It is often the appalling nature of these consequences which leads men suppose that that from which they follow must be sinful.

[30] Barth's revival of the idea of the total corruption of man's nature differs om earlier forms in being more extreme and lacking their excuse. It is not human privilege to have direct knowledge of what happened at the Creation nd Barth is aware that no *historical* event affords any basis for the doctrine at man was created in the image of God and totally lost that image by sin. his is a proposition, and Barthian 'revelation' does not mean the revealing Divinely authenticated propositions. Whence then does Barth derive his otion that man was created in the image of God and totally lost it? It can nly be derived from reflection upon *existing* human nature; and on that basis ie notion of total corruption simply defies facts and experience; for total ss of the image of God (which must include the capacity to respond to the ve of God as well as the capacity for natural knowledge of Him) if it did ot make an end of man *as man*, would certainly make impossible any know-dge that man was created in the Divine image, is a sinner, or that he *is*

egoism impelling in wrong and disastrous directions, but this fa *in conflict with* a sense of a higher call and way of life, which the cause of man's misery; he is *divided* within. Nor has he pow from within his egoism to overcome his misery: the attempt achieve salvation in that way is bound to fail because it seeks weakness the strength of deliverance and because it denies th grace of God, the most ultimate power there is. This grace man's true environment, but as it can only operate as a person relation it cannot move man without his co-operation. Salvatic consists in Theocentric life, because any other life is really in false position and not in accord with reality.[31] Man's trouble search for meaning in life, and for a foundation for true fellow ship in society (to the absence of which so much varied unhapp ness is due), can be found in God's self-revelation in Christ, i Jesus' teaching about man and his sin, and of salvation from si in the Kingship or Realm of God.

The Christian doctrine of salvation does not vilify reaso Nothing in contradiction with the deliverances of moral reaso and its judgments upon empirical facts can be established as tru by any other means. But the natural sciences are not the source of religion nor are their methods of verification the only reliabl tests of truth beyond their range. Reason apprehends the facts c the natural order; but in religion man ventures beyond them. Go is neither a part nor the whole of the order of nature, but it Creator and Ground, and therefore belongs to a higher or spiritu order which, from the standpoint of the natural, can only b described as supernatural. That man can attain knowledge an determine his own conduct is true as distinguishing man from a beneath him: it is not the sufficient truth about man in relation t all above him. He depends upon God for his creation, preserva tion and all blessings and, as a spiritual being, he can know thi dependence and accept his responsibility. To refuse this depend ence upon God and the responsibility it entails destroys religion to deny the proper independence Divinely conferred upon man a a created *person* denies his true moral life and always issues i inadequately moralized religion.

In Christianity moral conformity to the Divine will takes pre cedence over any philosophical understanding of God as He is i

totally corrupt. Nor does it help Barth to say the truth is known only t those to whom a literally recreated nature has been given solely by grace, f experience of the *divided* state of man's nature, that it is, as Dr. John Baillie says, 'a good thing spoiled,' is certainly not confined to the regenerate.

[31] If man is made the measure of all things it leads to loss of faith in man it is in one sense the ultimate sin man can commit, because it denies the tru about himself.

imself; the primary concern of the Christian religion is with od in His relation to nature and to man, with the communication Himself and His goodness to those whom He has created, and th the social relations of man with man. The search for God by ason alone tends to end in speculation: the Christian Gospel is at God is a living Reality and that, accordantly with His nature, e has taken the initiative and makes Himself known to man. It ever the nature of goodness to communicate itself; if God is a ing Reality and at least personal, there is no affront to reason believing that He has made Himself known, and supremely in d through a person; that He is beforehand with men in every ovement they may make towards Him; that He will further en- hten them; but all this never otherwise than by enabling them get their own insights or apart from bringing them into free edience to His will and thereby into fellowship with Himself. e need constantly to be on guard, in thinking of the process of vation and the operations of grace, against conceiving God's ations with us as though they were relations with things or with arionettes, instead of with *persons*. Nor may we think of the eator and Judge otherwise than as also the Father and edeemer: if the Divine moral demands are absolute, God is erciful as well as righteous; knowing that the frailty of man thout Him cannot but fall, He is loving and forgiving. His ve is the fulfilling of the Law because it is the source of all odness. This is the supreme ground of trust and confidence; cause, notwithstanding the Divine forbearance which will not hieve His ends by sheer power, treating His creatures as though ey were things—which involves that they may so act as to hinder e realization of God's purposes—His power of love is ultimately the power there is and can therefore in the end achieve His rposes in spite of all obstacles.

Emptiness and lack of meaning in life apart from God is our odern disease and our need of salvation. The deepest need of en is 'a faith which will enable them to overcome their fear and xiety, their pride and sensuality, their self-centredness and olation.' This is possible because God not only forgives sins and tores those who repent but also by grace gives repentance to ose who sin, together with the love that casts out fear and fishness. The way to salvation is that our final and determining ist shall be, not in ourselves, our values, our group or com- unity, as these may happen to be, but in God and His love, that we come to know in experience forgiveness and new e in Christ from which comes the transformation of values, and n make of community a true fellowship.

The profound change in life wrought by faith in Christ and His Spirit working with men has always been fundamental in t doctrine of salvation. It has meant deliverance from sin's domin tion and the despair involved in slavery to it. This goes deeper a is dearer to human hearts than any formal doctrine; indeed it is its bearing upon the practical issue of salvation that the doctri of Christ's divinity has derived its interest and importance; t Incarnation cannot be religiously understood merely as an int lectual solution to a historical phenomenon. Hence the prominen of Atonement doctrine in the scheme of salvation. Yet when consider to what the Church is committed in this doctrine, it astonishingly small. It is simply that Christ died for our salvatio and that for those who see in His death both God's love and H condemnation of sin, His death has redemptive power.

If it be asked in what sense the death of Christ is effective the work of salvation, there can be but one clear answer. If the Divine dealings with men are personal dealings, no Atoneme doctrine can be moral unless the death and resurrection of Chr affect men in a personal manner. It is only as that Divine dra awakens gratitude, love and moral strength in the human soul th it can have any meaning for the Christian. Nor can the death a resurrection of Christ be rightly considered in isolation from H life and teaching. If this be borne in mind, it should be plain th the doctrine that in the Atonement God arouses the respon which creates the desire and love of goodness is not fairly to dismissed as a 'merely subjective' or 'moral influence' theor for it means that as an objective fact, in this as ever, God h taken the initiative in reconciling man to Himself. In this mann it includes the only elements of truth and value which Christia have felt to be at the root of older theories which to-day a either meaningless or immoral.

For a thousand years from Origen to Anselm the gene belief was that Christ's death was a ransom paid to the dev This was a false interpretation, in the light of other features the old scheme of salvation, of the true conviction that in t death and resurrection of Jesus the power of evil was met a beaten. Such a victory is a new liberating power over sin a death, available to work in men's lives through the Holy Spir that the victory was won *does* make a difference in the life mankind, if it was the power of God for salvation worki through all that Jesus taught and accomplished. But it mus accepted by individual persons and lead to victory in their li before the salvation is effective. Similarly the idea of Chris death as a penalty, a vicarious satisfaction for all the sins of t

ilty human race, by which God's honour and justice were vindi-
ted, was an immoral distortion, in the light of other elements in
e old scheme of salvation, of the truth that sin is profoundly
rious and must ever be so regarded. Though God forgives those
o repent, real repentance is the root difficulty so long as man's
oism is intact, and the death and resurrection of Christ do con-
tute a demonstration of the righteousness of God against sin
d self-centredness. The Calvinist development of Anselm's
aching, which made Christ's death a *substitutionary* penalty for
man sins, implying that God needs to be propitiated and ap-
ased, contradicts the New Testament idea of God; while the
ea of a *penalty* inflicted on the sinless has no meaning.[32] Yet few
uld deny that there is value in vicarious *suffering*, and the Cross
es show the costliness of Divine love, which again helps to
eak down egoism and can stimulate gratitude and love.

It was natural that in trying to show and defend the signifi-
nce of Christ's death in relation to sin and salvation early
hristians should have interpreted it in relation to Old Testament
crifices. This, however, has proved unfortunate and its con-
nuance is worse. The Jewish system of making reparation for sin
o doubt came to be interpreted symbolically: the blood of the
imal represented the life of the penitent worshipper who offered
But these sacrifices could not be the *source* of new strength or
ange the heart and will. The differences between them and the
e, death and resurrection of Christ are far greater and more
portant than the forced resemblances first read in and later
pposed to exist, and which supplied the background of much
tonement doctrine. Those sacrifices were momentary acts: here
s a permanent, unvarying obedience, issuing in a life of un-

[32] The sinlessness of Jesus means his freedom from actual sin. Often, wever, such terms as 'Christ's sinless nature' and 'our sinful nature' ord another instance of the non-ethical and misleading use of the word *sin*. our nature is called sinful because it is a source of temptation and thus pplies material for sin, then the nature of Christ cannot be sinless without plying that it was not a source of temptation to him. In that event, he uld not be 'tempted like as we are,' and His nature was not truly human. eology constantly needs Dr. Tennant's warnings against hypostatizing stractions and then allowing them to solidify into dogma. Our original ture is the equipment with which we are born, the in-born springs of in-ence; it is in this sense non-moral. Only when 'nature' includes what we quire in life is it a moral nature. If 'nature' is treated as a concept of an's 'essence,' as distinct from the nature of animals — a notion of what an ideally is or ought to be — it is then what popular speech calls our igher nature.' Knowledge of what man *is*, as distinct from his destiny, ust rest upon knowledge of the actual course of his development, not upon ductions from *a priori* anthropology based upon a 'concept of man.' The ature' of man is not a static 'essence' but a growing thing, a 'becoming.'

swerving loyalty to God, and death voluntarily accepted in th course of a Divinely-appointed mission. The *Epistle to th Hebrews* says bluntly that the whole sacrificial system was esse tially futile: those offerings could never be effective for sin c salvation. 'He taketh away the first, that he may establish th second.' Would that it had been so! Unfortunately the takin away was not completed. The belief that Jesus must have fulfille the Old Testament in too literal a fashion led to the fuller inte pretation of His death in terms of Old Testament sacrifice making it conform to aspects of them with which it had no identit and to which it bore no real resemblance. That whole circle c ideas is foreign to the modern outlook. Much would be gained an nothing lost if we could be altogether rid of it.[33]

What was truly achieved by Christ's life and death of pur obedience is available for all men because therein is a power, de clared by the resurrection, by which our lives can be modelle after the same pattern. By Christ's accomplishment of the will c God we can be sanctified as we become in heart and mind ident fied with it; not because God accepts His sufferings in place of an penalty due from us, but because that perfect obedience, as w meditate upon and realize it, reveals the odiousness of the si from which it can wean us. Arising from the depths of the spir of Christ, it can enter into the depths of our spirits with transform ing power.[34]

Without a sense of sin and failure, of weakness and nee saving faith has no meaning. Salvation is impossible without th

[33] Unfortunately they are prominent in our Prayer-book services an prayers, as in Article XXXI. To modern people they are either meaningle or misleading, or an offence. And, as with language about original sin an guilt, we still have to go on explaining that words do not mean what the plainly say. This exposes those who do it to charges of dishonesty and th Church, whose continued inaction fails to rectify the position, to the charg of indifference to truth.

[34] Depreciation of what is called the 'merely moral' and of the significanc of Christ's teaching as containing the eternally true pith and marrow of th moral standard, in order the more to emphasize other elements in Christianity is foolish and, in any Christian teacher, revolting. For a great part of th unique power of Christianity and of the meaning of Jesus the Christ is H living embodiment of the supreme moral ideal and His appeal to man's mora conscience. For this, all but a few reverence Him, even those of othe religions. And when it is believed that He lives and is a present, active powe really to fix attention upon Him and His teaching is to be fashioned int something of His likeness. There is nothing more important for personal an social salvation than that men should, by practical contemplation of Chris thus mould their souls in His spirit and then do with all their might the thing they see they ought to do when their eyes are opened and their will strengthened by the grace of such communion with Him.

ith that man's sin and consequent confusion and wretchedness
ıe not God's intention for human life; that actual sin always
ings about a fall from the Divine intention, and that God's pur-
ose is to restore man to his true status as a spiritual being and a
n of God. Without belief in original sin and its alleged conse-
ıences, the division and conflict within us is just as intense, the
ctory of instinct and impulse over conscience just as humiliating,
e weakness of will, the longing for deliverance and strength just
oppressive and imperative as they always have been.[35] The
ingling of good and evil, alike in motive and action, is a grave
ality. The universality of actual sin after infancy, the immense
ower of sinful habit and of social influences, constitute the suffi-
ent need of the good news of salvation. Not only does sin
rrupt the human family, but increasing knowledge greatly ex-
nds the range within which the will can make provision for the
esh to fulfil the lusts thereof. The sinfulness of sin increases
ith the knowledge of God and His demands, and of ourselves in
ıe light of that knowledge. The light of Christ will always con-
ct of sin and in His light there is no cloak for sin. But the light
ıat has been manifested and which convicts us, also contains
ithin it the hope and the possibility of victory and salvation
ecause it is not only the light of an ideal but a living, active,
racious Reality. Thus we may well think the Scotists were right
ı holding that the Incarnation was the eternal purpose of God,
ıd implied in the Creation, to reveal Himself to man so far as
ıat is possible in a person, that we should follow the example of
ır Saviour Christ and, by the fuller source of grace which is the
ctivity of His Spirit, be made like unto Him. Thus is the
hristian religion a message and the power of salvation, including
ut transcending even the relation of Christ to human sin and
fficient for men in their travail on the way to their destiny. If
o much of God's dealings with us be true, further questions about
ıat destiny may be left in filial trust, where in any event they are,
ı His gracious will.

[35] Though the far-reaching differences between the 'once-born' and the twice-born' remain, and it will probably always be impossible to devise orms of words satisfactory to the 'once-born' which will not seem inade-uate to the 'twice-born,' or such as satisfy the latter without appearing xaggerated to the former.

THE VALUE OF THE BIBLE

By the Rev. A. C. Bouquet, D.D., Lecturer in the History and Comparative Study of Religions in the University of Cambridge.

IN order that I may make clear the standpoint from which I approach this august subject, I ask your leave to begin with a short personal explanation. I have no clerical ancestry! My father was a Tractarian layman of French Huguenot descent, who with all his five brothers belonged to the business world of London. My mother was what would be called an old-fashioned High Churchwoman, the daughter of a Kentish yeoman of the old school. I was brought up in my earliest years at a mid-Victorian Anglo-Catholic church with a fairly liberal outlook, which opened its pulpit to almost every school of thought. I have therefore no temptations to align my own thinking with that of a Biblicist evangelical family tradition, still less an obligation to burn incense to the shade of an episcopal grandparent.

Further, when I went to school it was to an old London foundation which had been reconstituted on the basis of the new learning. The headmaster was a Scotch layman, trained in the methods of nineteenth-century Cambridge science, and a former student at Heidelberg. Himself a chemist, he taught (in addition to chemistry and physics, which we all had to take) German, geography, and Scripture, and into his Bible classes he introduced the modern methods he had learnt elsewhere. Professor Armstrong once said of him: 'far in advance of Sanderson of Oundle.' The result is that I have never had to unlearn any of the *principles* of my early Bible study, and that when I entered Cambridge myself I found no discomfort when attending lectures by Burkitt or Tennant, as did some of my fellow-students. While in many ways this has been a clear gain to me, it has made it difficult at times to think along the lines of other theologians both in this country and on the Continent, since very few indeed seem to have shared my early experiences. I often wish that more of them had. When I add that in our sixth form at school I had as companions Professor Andrade, Francis Clarke, afterwards of Balliol and All Souls, also now a Professor in the University of London, and the late Dr. John Cadoux of Mansfield, and that just outside my time it contained Frankland Armstrong and Charles Bruce-Gardner, you will understand that the atmosphere was not only stimulating, but hardly that of an ecclesiastical seminary. And one more point. It fell to my lot to read history at the University, and that meant

arning how to handle original authorities, and how to try to re-nstruct the course of events from documents. If we studied the xt of Chastellain and Philippe de Commines, it was not in order hand out chunks of them afterwards to grammar-school boys, it to learn how to piece together the events of the reign of ouis XI. It was impossible for anyone who subsequently went to study the Bible in the same way not to take the obvious ental step of asking: Why should we read to unsophisticated ngregations the raw material contained in the Scriptures, with ry little, if any, critical comment, when we should hesitate to do at sort of thing elsewhere? This question has haunted me ever nce. I have now been preaching from the Bible for forty years, d preaching with zest, if I may say so, and I hope to be spared go on preaching a little longer. During those years I have had casion to dip fairly deeply into the sacred literature of other ligions, and I am bound to say that after those excursions I have me back often with a sense of relief to the documents of my own ith. Nevertheless it would be dishonest not to say that I am un-sy about the way in which in the Church of England we still ake use of those documents, and I am fully conscious that uring all those years of my ministry a crisis has been approach-g in the public and private use of the Scriptures, and that that risis is now upon us. That is the point at which I wish to begin ow.

Face to face with a perplexing situation, it is plainly our duty try to express as clearly as we can what we believe to be the sting and essential value of the Bible for serious-minded and eligious persons. I propose, then, the following line of approach:

(1) The Bible is a sacred book. What in religion taken as a hole is the function of a sacred book?

(2) In what respects does the Bible differ from other books hich are held sacred?

If we are able to find satisfactory answers to these two ques-ions, we shall, I submit, be, as a result, in a better position to ecide how to make the best use of the sacred material which the ible contains.

We are told that in the Student Christian Movement there is a endency to return to the Bible for guidance. If that is true, then esides welcoming it, we should do what we can to ensure that it a right sort of return.

ow did writing begin?

It has sometimes been asserted that any script tends to be acred — that is to say, to be thought of as having supernatural

properties. Not many folk in antiquity, and few even up to th nineteenth century, were able to write, or to read what others hav written, and written characters certainly have power, not merel as reproducing by symbols the sound of the human voice, or th forms of living creatures, but also as inciting to action. But thi judgment must needs be modified. The origin of written symbol is often very secular. Quite probably it goes back to the makin of pottery, when artefacts were marked with signs indicating th manufacturer or owner of the object in question. Writing of an sort as such seems to have had a utilitarian or commercial quite a much as a religious origin, and there is no evidence in the ancien civilizations either of the Indus valley, of Mesopotamia,[1] or o China, that writing was restricted to or specifically associated wit religious purposes.

Sacred writing.

Having said that, one can admit that much ancient writing i connected with sacred affairs, events, and persons. This is pre sumably in the main due to the fact that religion is such a strong motive force in human life, not perhaps as strong as the urges o sex and hunger, but still very strong nevertheless. Literacy, both in ancient and modern times, has been closely associated with religion. The Jain community in India has the highest percentage (among non-Christians) of persons able to read and write. The temples in ancient Sumeria, and in Burma the Buddhist monas teries, have in the past performed the task of the elementary school; while in Europe elementary education was carried on by the Church long before it was taken in hand by the State.

The smallest and earliest sacred writings were probably little more than sentences, sometimes inscribed on tablets of baked clay, sometimes on earthenware bowls, sometimes on stones, some times on the walls of buildings. They may have been answers given by sacred men and women on behalf of a deity (earlier than but similar to the oracles of Apollo at Delphi, or the leaves of the Cumaean Sibyl). Or they may have been prayers, invocations, or charms, carefully composed by the proper professional sacred man or woman whose business it was to do such things.

As the centuries pass, longer and more varied types of religious literature begin to emerge:

(1) hymns, or collections of hymns;

(2) records of myths (*μῦθοι*), or tales of events having a sacred significance, such as the stories of the Creation and the Deluge in

[1] See especially Professor Langdon's historical introduction to Sumerian Grammar.

Mesopotamia, or in Hellas the alleged acts of a god, which were recited on festal occasions and anniversaries by 'prophetai,' who were attached to the temples;

(3) liturgies, or written forms of prayer (the earliest known being, as far as can be judged, those current in Mesopotamia about 3600 B.C.);

(4) codes of law. King Khammurabi of Mesopotamia (*c.* 2100 B.C.) claimed to have received his code from Shamash, the sun-god; and the story of Moses in *Exodus* is familiar;

(5) sacred dramas. The earliest we know anything about is a kind of passion-play of Egyptian origin, fragments of which survive on a stone in the British Museum, and are a copy of an older document which may be dated about 3400 B.C. Some of the tablets discovered at Ras Shamra in Syria may contain similar compositions. We know that much Greek tragedy is of religious origin, and even to this day dramatic representations take place in Chinese and Japanese temples.

As ethnic crosses over into higher and prophetic religion, the character of the sacred literature tends to become modified. The hymns have an increasingly ethical tone; the theology becomes more philosophical, or at any rate less naïve. Discourses, wise sayings, sermons, aphorisms, interpretations of history, and even letters of instruction all come to have their place.

The most ancient highly developed sacred literatures of which we have any direct knowledge are those of the Sumerians in Mesopotamia, and of the early Egyptians. Sir Charles Woolley tells us how 'men and women, trained in the Sumerian temples, lived on in them as religious scribes, making fresh copies of the ancient texts stored in the library of the god, preparing the "books" for the temple services, hymns, litanies, and so on. . . .'

What is a sacred book?

And so we come to our first question: What exactly do we mean by a sacred book? Presumably we mean a piece of literature long enough to merit the name of 'book,' the recital or private perusal of which fosters, fortifies, or revives the original experiences or activities connected with a specific religious belief. The character of any sacred book is mainly determined by the consideration as to whether it is employed in the service of religion proper, or of magic. Books of ritual or of spells are mainly magical, even if those who use them will not admit it. The words must be accurately recorded and correctly repeated, otherwise the desired results will not follow. To ensure that the deity addressed will be

propitious, the recitation must be word-perfect. Hence its sentences must be most carefully memorized or read out from a carefully prepared manuscript,[2] and if a slip is made, there will have to be a fresh start from the beginning. (I take for granted here the definition that magic is concerned with obtaining power over deity and compelling deity to do what one wants, while religion is concerned with establishing a proper relationship with deity, whose control over human beings is admitted and whose claims in some higher or prophetic religions are regarded as uncompromisingly moral.)

It seems then that just as worship in general may be objective or subjective, so the use of a sacred book may be both objective and subjective: (1) objective entirely when used in the magical way[3]; (2) objective and subjective as well when used for religious purposes, since to secure the favour of a god the worshippers must, by their use of the sacred literature, bring themselves into such a state of mind and heart that the god will grant them their petitions; (3) subjective entirely perhaps when the reader of the sacred book seeks divine information and desires doctrinal enlightenment.

If the religious belief in question be based upon certain alleged historical events, then some account of these events will be sure to form a prominent part of the sacred book attached to the belief. This would account for the Gilgamesch epic and the stories of Creation and Deluge which were found in a great library of baked clay tablets in Assyria. We may also think of such a book as providing a rule of life, or declaring a doctrine about the nature of deity; and these matters will certainly be part of the standard literature of any highly developed religion. But before everything else, the object of a sacred book is to extend and stimulate a special religious experience, so that those who attend to it become, by reading it or hearing it read, sharers in the actual experiences or activities which produced it and caused it to be written, whether of objective worship or subjective meditation.

Let us illustrate this. Suppose someone at school is set to learn by heart a really great piece of English poetry, written with sincere and profound emotion. At the time the boy or girl regards it

[2] As at the Chinese Altar of Heaven.

[3] St. Augustine's 'tolle lege' seems to imply the existence of magical, or superstitious, or oracular consultations of the (verbally inspired?) sacred text as far back as the fourth century, and of course John Wesley knew the practice. It is said that the idea of a verbally inspired sacred canon belongs to Judaism, from which it is transferred to Christianity, though in itself it is a sub-Christian idea.

as 'prep,' and may memorize it mechanically; but later, either under the guidance of a wise teacher, or with the natural growth of personality, the real meaning which it embodies, and the emotional tension which evoked it become clear, and then it is more than likely that youth will be stirred by the words and will come to share the feelings of the poet; and since the words have become grafted into his or her subconscious mind, they will confer character, and will mould personality more perhaps than if the child had merely been told to 'behave in such and such a way.'

Again, a tale of a saint or hero may be recounted or memorized, and its reading and repetition will have the effect of making the hearers say, 'How splendid! I should like to be like that.' Or again, a rather obscure but beautifully sounding piece of prose or verse may be recited in public, and will convey to the hearers not a sharp-cut intellectual image, but a sense of awe and mystery and delight, 'making,' as John Masefield says somewhere, 'beauty quick in the heart.' Or a hymn, canticle or anthem may be sung, and even though the literal meaning may to the congregation remain dim (as in the case of Parry's setting of Blake's Jerusalem), a certain religious experience or spiritual uplift will no doubt be mediated to the hearers.

Discovery or revelation?

If then the character of any sacred book is determined mainly by the consideration as to what kind of experience or activity it is expected to record and transmit, we must next ask: What are these experiences and activities likely to be?

Shall we find the record of the discovery of Deity by man, or of revelation by Deity to man? Or shall we find the record of the discovery or apprehension of a revelation? Or neither? Will the experience, on the contrary, be exactly what Feuerbach, Freud, and Karl Marx say it is, merely the projection and personification of one's moral or aesthetic or economic ideals, and their adulation? Or will the experience be of One Who is beyond all that, and Who is 'all alone and evermore shall be so'? And again, will there be the record of the apprehension of a Deity Who stands in a negative relation to the time-process? Or, conversely, that of a Deity who acts in history? Actually the non-Biblical sacred books, other than the Koran, seem very largely to apprehend Deity in the former aspect, the Biblical in the latter.[4] (Readers of Mr. Aldous Huxley's latest anthology will be aware that he discriminates against the Biblical literature on this very ground, though it is a

[4] See Kierkegaard's interesting distinction between what he calls 'religion A' and 'religion B.'

weakness rather than a strength in his position that he does so. Some of the leaders of the new India are far from happy about the attitude of Hindus towards history and the sense of the historical.[5]

Yet even here, as Emil Brunner has I think rightly shown, there must be a distinction between *different kinds of history*. Perhaps it will be best to quote him:

> 'All organic life moves in cycles; from the seed comes the tree, from the tree the fruit, from the fruit the seed, and so on in eternal recurrence. That is why we cannot speak of natural *history*; this series of happenings is non-historical. Where the same thing continually recurs, there is no history. History only takes place within the human sphere — historical events are the third stage in time . . . Human time, historical time, includes, it is true, that organic time of growth and becoming, but it is itself "decision time." No decisions are made in nature; history is the sphere of decision. Decisions are made where the mind or spirit, and above all the will, emerge . . . The will is the kernel of personality. The more personal life becomes, the more relation there is with time.
>
> 'But even history, understood as human history, does not represent the highest stage in the time-character of events. History, it is true, is the sphere of the unrepeatable, in contrast to nature as the sphere of recurrence. In the cycle of summer and winter, becoming and vanishing, that which never recurs is embedded. Regarded however in a larger context, even the historically unique events are not so unrepeatable as they claim to be at first — there is nothing new under the sun. Even history, regarded purely as human history, possesses something of a cyclic character. For human beings never escape from the control of the forces with which they wrestle.'[6]

Brunner concludes that the really *unique* event, which would be unrepeatable, would have to be an event that would break the power of those forces with which man is always in conflict; which would realize not only the partial meaning but the whole meaning of life. The absolutely unique historical action would therefore be that in which the Absolute and Eternal Deity not merely controlled or intervened in history,[7] but actually entered history for the specific purpose of freeing human beings from the control of the forces with which they wrestle, and this, when finally achieved, would be unrepeatable, since by its very nature it would exclude all possibility of repetition. I would ask my hearers to keep these distinctions in mind as we proceed with our argument.

The main types.

By far the largest amount of sacred literature consists of hymns, that is to say, of lyrical addresses to Deity; lyrical, be-

[5] See Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Meridian Press, p. 75.

[6] From *Revelation and Reason*, Zurich, 1941; English translation, Cambridge, 1946.

[7] Even this would be more than what Dr. Tennant has called 'God causing Himself to be understood.'

cause a poem called lyric with short rhythmical lines, set to be sung to a musical instrument, is the natural form of emotional approach to Deity. Once these lyrics are collected they form in themselves a sacred book, and the chanting of these induces a state of consciousness in the believer which is precisely what is required in order to conform to the standard attitude expected by the god or goddess. When adulatory, it is of course centred upon human interests, and verges upon the magical. The Vedic hymns are estimated at 1,028, and it is likely that the collections of hymns in the Sumerian or Egyptian temples were equally large. It would be difficult to say how many hymns our Christian collections of recent years contain, but the total must be immense, and many favourites lie outside such collections. The bhakti hymns of India also number thousands. John Wesley describes the Methodist hymn book as 'a little body of experimental and practical divinity.'

Another type of sacred book is the prophetic or didactic. Here the collection consists of sermons, aphorisms, proverbs, or outpourings such as George Fox would have called 'openings' (*e.g.* 'thus He shewed me . . .').[8] Sometimes, as in the Buddhist Sutras, the form is that of a sermon or discourse set in a kind of standard framework. Sometimes it is that of a chain of sayings, not necessarily connected or coherent, but joined together like miscellaneous beads on a string, simply because they contain the same keyword or thought. This form is found in the prophecies of Isaiah, in the Lun-yü, Analects, or *obiter dicta* of Confucius, in many of the Hindu Upanishads, in the teaching portions of the Christian Gospels, and at any rate in some of the longer chapters (Suras) of the Koran.

The historical or narrative sacred book seems almost entirely confined to Hebrew and Christian circles, a fact which will engage our serious attention. Almost the only similar books outside the Bible are the Ramayana in India, which is the sacred book of a Hindu minority and is non-canonical to strict Brahmins; the life of Apollonius of Tyana; and the folk-tales of the life of the Buddha.

Sacred books fall naturally in three classes: (1) pre-Biblical, such as the Vedic scriptures; (2) Biblical, such as the Bible; (3) post-Biblical, such as the Koran, and scriptures of the Manichees.[9] There are also canonical and non-canonical books to which varying degrees of sanctity and authority are assigned, and commentaries on sacred texts which are treated as canonical in certain

[8] So *Amos* vii.

[9] The latter display the influence of the Bible, in that they claim to be connected with divine, or 'saving' history.

cases (*e.g.* the Upanishads, and Mrs. Eddy's book referred to below).

One further introductory point. A sacred book is hardly ever a complete and well-finished whole, composed by a single author. It is usually a library or compilation containing a miscellany of passages which have come to be valued as contributing to the renewal of experience. Even such a book as the Bhagavadgita of India, though now circulating as a complete entity, is really only a single canto in the vast Indian epic of the Mahabharata, and has itself undergone much editing and expansion. In a few cases a religious leader has produced a single more or less complete sacred book for the express and avowed purpose of propagating his or her faith. Examples of such are the Book of Revelation in the New Testament, the *Shepherd* of Hermas, Brigham Young's *Book of Mormon*, Mrs. Eddy's *Science and Health*, and the Koran of Mohammed.[10] Perhaps we might add the writings of John Bunyan as well. The quality and sincerity of some of these may be called in question, but there can be no doubt that anyone who approaches them in a submissive and receptive frame of mind is likely to be carried away by the rhetoric, and to form thought-associations and mental images which will have exactly the effect desired by the original author. He will be filled with the precise kind of emotion which his teacher wants him to have.

A sacred book, I repeat, is not expected to be intellectually grasped, taken as a whole or in sentences. So long as it is *felt*, its work is largely done. Thus an ordinary village congregation cannot be expected to understand *Isaiah* xl or some of the obscurer parts of the minor prophets, or even the more difficult parts of the Pauline Epistles, nor can we suppose that an unsophisticated gathering of Moslems understands all the allusions in the turgid utterances of a long Sura. But behind each passage stands the prophet or apostle, and the congregation receives the impression of the intense earnestness of someone who believed in the Living God.[11] The passage conveys a sense of overwhelming faith, and ministers grace unto the hearers. The religious community which sets its seal upon any standard collection of sacred literature is guided in its selection by custom and emotion rather than by the cold light of reason.

[10] Recent criticism suggests that there was a shorter recension of the Koran put together by Mohammed himself. The longer recension, which is what we possess to-day, was made up of this shorter recension with the addition of other 'Suras' collected by various disciples.

[11] Cf. Prof. H. A. R. Gibb in his *Haskell Lectures*. Chicago, 1945, p. 4.

The distinctive character of the Bible.

We come thus to our *second* question: In what respects does the Bible differ from other books which are held sacred?

The answer to this is in two stages: (1) The emphasis in the Bible is upon revelation rather than on discovery. I do not mean that the idea of revelation is absent from other sacred books, but in the Bible it plays a much more important part and is controlled by the biblical conception of Deity. (2) The revelation is indissolubly connected with a special emphasis upon historical events.

I must deal with each of these in turn. With regard to the *first*:

(1) The idea of revelation is alleged to be connected with the Hindu Veda. But although the distinction is drawn in Hindu literature between *sruti* and *smriti*, 'that which hath been heard' and 'that which hath been remembered,' what has been heard is not thought of as spoken by a transcendent God, but as consisting of words inherently divine and sacred. Indeed the Karma Mimamsa denies that there was any Personal Revealer. One learned pundit has told me that *sruti* and *smriti* are more like what we Christians mean by 'canonical' and 'uncanonical.' The great scholastic philosopher of India, Sankara, considers the Vedas as developed in the Upanishads to be self-evident revelation, and Professor Radhakrishnan in his *Indian Philosophy* shows the same point of view when he says that the Vedic hymns attempt to explain the mysteries of the world, not by means of any superhuman insight or extraordinary revelation, but by the light of unaided reason. (Professor F. H. Smith of Manchester comments that this is an easy step from the belief that behind the sacred literature there is no Personal Revealer.)

In Buddhism there is an enormous mass of sacred literature, so great that no single Buddhist monk has read the whole of it. What happens is that certain special treatises are singled out, such as the Diamond-Cutter Sutra or the Lotus of the True Law, but these again are canonical rather than revealed, since there is for most Buddhists no Divine Revealer but rather intuitive discovery. The idea of a Divine Buddha-Spirit, variously known as Vairoçana or Dharmakaya, who bestows revelations, is a fairly late development, and corresponds to the idea of the Johannine Logos, though there is no once-for-all revelation. It does not seem to me that the learned Burmese Buddhists (with one of whom I have lately been corresponding) have any use for this idea. They are much more like American humanists, and their sermons contain not a single reference to anything like a revealing Deity.

The sacred books of Shinto are merely Records of Ancient Matters. They are regarded as entirely human productions, to be

revered because of the subjects of which they treat, but possessing neither the quality of inspiration nor that of revelation. The word *kangakari*, or god-possession, is, I understand, not used in connexion with these books, but solely in relation to seers who claim to utter divine oracles. There is, it is true, a new class of literature arising among sect-Shintoists in Japan which claims to be a record of the logia of certain sectarian prophets. I have seen the translations of some of these logia, and although it is difficult to be sure how far the motif of imitating the Christian Gospels has been at work, it is possible that we are witnessing here an example of the way in which the didactic parts of the Synoptic Gospels came into being. In any case these new sacred books are not regarded as canonical outside their own sects, any more than the late sectarian Vaishnavite literature of modern India.

In China, Taoist literature is now only just beginning to be studied on any scale, but so far as can be judged it is on the same side as that of early Buddhism, and is naturalistic, embodying the results of intuitive discovery. The literature of Confucianism is regarded as a series of ordinary human compilations recording the example of pious and good men of past generations and their wise sayings. It is not revealed in any strict sense, but it conveys to the reverent reader the impression that there is a moral government by a good God, and that this God from time to time raises up good men as leaders and examples to the people at large.

It is not until we get to Persia that we encounter a real example of an alleged revelation by a Divine Personal Revealer. Zoroastrianism, like Judaism, Christianity, Incarnational Hinduism, and Islam, depends explicitly upon the belief that God has spoken directly to man, either by a prophet, or by a theophany, single or multiple. Yet even here there are differences. The religion of Zoroaster is, to use Brunner's phrase, 'moralism projected into the sphere of metaphysics.' It is the self-affirmation and self-confirmation of the natural moral consciousness, nothing more. Ahuramazda is the moral law heightened and personified into the Absolute — He is, in fact, a projection in the Freudian sense, but there is no mystery about Him to be revealed, no Gospel to be communicated. Thus the Gathas and the other parts of the Zendavesta, though they often contain noble sentiments, do not yet constitute, even in the same sense as the Hebrew prophets, a definite Personal Revelation. Incarnational Hinduism may be based on the proclamations of its avatars, but these are docetic and legendary, and the figure of the Divine Krishna, who utters the teaching of the Bhagavadgita, is not connected with any historical event, but rather with religious fiction, while the doctrine which he teaches

not linked with any spatio-temporal activity of Deity, but might ave been uttered in any age and is mainly a text-book of yogic ıysticism. Apparently the multiple avatars of Vishnu are for the elief of ignorance and not for the deliverance from sin and ickedness.

The creative originality of the Koran is almost nil. It is a lend of Old Testament and Rabbinical Judaism, second-hand hristianity, and Arabian paganism, with a small, but very small, ersonal element attached. How much modification modernism ıay effect in Islam in generations to come is not for me to say. It only the minority Mutazilite school which has so far maintained ıat the *teaching* of the Koran is eternal, but that the language is lohammed's own, and therefore fallible. The view of the ortho-ox majority is that every word was communicated to the Prophet ı an audible voice (Ibn Khaldun). All Mohammed could do was) receive the words in a mechanical way. Revelation here, how-ver, is not in events[12] so much as in a book (as someone has said, ıe difference between Christianity and Islam is that in the former ıe Word became Flesh, in the latter the Word became Book).[13]

I have given these doctrinal differences in outline because so ıuch nonsense is often talked about 'the claim to revelation in l the great religions.' As a matter of fact there is no such thing s a uniform claim, and 'revelation' in certain cases is simply a isnomer. Moreover we do not know to what extent the Incarna-on-period in Hinduism (and Buddhism as well) was affected by complex of ideas which also influenced the early development of hristianity. There are so many resemblances that complete in-ependence is unthinkable. What of course needs to be empha-zed is that sacred books arising out of different ideas of ilightenment or inspiration from above will naturally vary very reatly in form and content, and it may well be that the feature hich is called 'revelation' in the Christian books ought to have a ame of its own.

I still believe the logos-doctrine of the Fourth Gospel and the reek Fathers to be defensible within certain limits. But the words Brunner[14] are also, I believe, indisputably true: 'the facts the history of religion . . . show us that the common assumption

[12] Though Mohammed did recognize the Divine ordering of events, as example in the battle of Badr, and in Allah's protection of His Prophet ring the Hijra.

[13] This severe restriction has led to varying degrees of dependence upon *nnat* or tradition in order to relieve the pressure of the rigidly used text the Koran.

[14] In his *Revelation and Reason*, p. 235.

that the Christian claim to revelation is opposed by a variety of similar claims of equal value is wholly untenable. The amazing thing is the exact opposite, namely, that the claim of a revelation (by a Revealer) possessing universal validity in the history of religion is rare. The claim of revelation made by the Christian faith is in its radicalism as solitary as its content.' Consider the occurrence of the verb גלה in the Old Testament and its corresponding verb in the Greek, and you will see what is meant.

There is of course a clear and logical difference between *claiming* to be a revelation and *being actually* a revelation, but in this case experience has shown that the claim is capable of being substantiated in experience, and I feel sure that Brunner is right when he says that the nature of God's Being is such that disclosure is impossible along impersonal lines, just as it is between two human beings. I can know things *about* my neighbour by observation and discovery (such as the colour of his hair, the way he walks, and the nature of his handwriting); but I cannot *know* my neighbour except in so far as he lets me into the secret places of his heart. And this he can only do fully by what he does, since actions speak louder than words, which may be insincere or misunderstood unless enforced by deeds. And even the latter must be observed carefully over a fairly long period in order to ascertain the motive that lies behind them. And what is true as between me and my neighbour is true as between me and God, though in a more eminent degree, especially as the knowledge of God not merely enlarges the sphere of my knowing, but transforms me so that I become more *occupied* by the Spirit of God, more alive, more free, more truly myself. This is the meaning behind the phrase in the collect *quem nosse vivere*, which derives directly from the claim of the Johannine Jesus: 'This is life eternal, to get to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'

This position is not inconsistent with belief that *all* knowledge is in some sense revelation, the discovery of what God wills that we should know about His mighty works in external nature and in the mind of man; nor is it incompatible with the belief that revelation is progressive. Both ideas are comprehended within the Biblical idea of what revelation is, as may be seen from *Romans* and *Hebrews* i. But there are degrees or grades of revelation, and the highest sort recognized by the Bible literature is of a sort to which there is no parallel elsewhere. Moreover we must not forget that even knowledge *about* God obtained by our reason is dependent upon the gift to us of those reasoning powers by God, Whose creative will is prior to our very existence. The creative evolution of humanity is thus indirectly the self-revelation of God, and this

precisely the doctrine implied in the Scriptures.

(2) The best comment I feel able to offer upon the *second* tatement as set forth above, *i.e.* that the revelation with which the ible literature is concerned is indissolubly connected with a pecial emphasis upon historical events, is a paragraph written by rofessor Burkitt in the composite work, *The Legacy of Israel*:

> 'The religion of Judaism, above almost all others, was dominated by a sense of Divine Purpose, manifested in Time. God had set the world going so many years ago, and He was going in His good time to bring it to an end, whenever His purpose had been accomplished. Reality, on this view, was a grand Drama, a Play to be performed once and for all and never repeated, so that some single Events were decisive moments in the Divine Plan of things. To God, it is true, a thousand years are as one day and one day as a thousand years. Yet, though our clocks may be imperfect instruments for measuring duration, the Succession of Events is really there. The Christians took over this set of ideas from Judaism, and it still dominates every Christian philosophy. To the Christian, one Event, at least, the Incarnation, is central: a certain state of things preceded it and a different state of things followed it.'

hat is excellent, as far as it goes, and it was driven home again nd again by Burkitt in his characteristic way. Yet the religion of ie Jews was an incomplete religion. It was a religion of hope, ut that hope remained unfulfilled to all who did not accept the hristian Event. Judaism, as Professor H. G. Wood puts it, was n attempt to systematize an incomplete revelation, and such ttempts have their inevitable limitations. Even the plain record f the earthly career of Jesus in itself, without comment or interretation, does not and would not constitute the completion of that evelation. Hence, although we attach to the records of the Jews ie records of the earliest Christians, those records include interretation as well as record. It is the same in both cases. As Emil runner says, the record of Hebrew history, compiled by a neutral unbelieving chronicler, would simply be a piece of quite ordiny Oriental national history. It is the witness of the prophetic terpreters which is needed to bring out the Divine Purpose in the are 'chronicles of Israel and Judah.' Similarly Jesus, by reason f the fact that He actually was the Incarnate Logos, could not y or perhaps even be conscious of all that was true about Himlf, in order to make His significance clear. Without the testiony of the Apostles, who could see the Incarnation as a whole, om Birth to Ascension, and who were witnesses of the Presence nong them of the Risen and Living Christ—without that testiony the Revelation of the Incarnate Life would remain unished, and even undisplayed. It would be that of a Jewish ophet who was unfortunately judicially murdered. Only after the isen Christ had manifested Himself to and been acknowledged

by an apostolic witness was the circuit of this historical drama complete. To quote Brunner once more : 'The act of the historical revelation is completed only where, in the spoken word of an apostle, it becomes (1) the knowledge of faith, (2) the confession of faith, and (3) the witness which conveys faith.'

Now it is just these three things which the books of the New Testament contain. It may be that Luther was right, and that the canon should have been more restricted than it is. But the canon is there, and its existence is not only a public witness in documentary form to the Single Supreme Event (to use Professor Burkitt's phrase), but is a guarantee and safeguard against legend and myth intruding themselves into the records of that Event. I know it will be argued that in the Matthaean gospel and perhaps in a few other places[15] myth has crept in; but the existence of the documents means that the record is available to the public for criticism, sifting, and appraisal. This seems to be implied in the description of them by Origen as δεδημοσιευμέναι γραφαί, writings for public circulation. And when criticism has done its most radical work, we are aware that a very large bulk of sober history remains behind, in spite of the sifting.

We arrive then at the position that the entire riches of the Bible are controlled by the fact that the God of the Bible is the Righteous Lord of History. (1) The Bible is great literature. Through it ordinary people are enabled to find contact with the world of antiquity, and to discover that there were vast empires and wonderful adjustments to life long before Abraham left Ur. Through it they can learn how very ancient are parts of the Decalogue, and how much the fortunes of monotheism are bound up with the emergence of the latter in Egypt. They can learn how in antiquity men of faith had to face the disasters of conquest, deportation, and invasion, just as we have had to. But they can learn other things of even greater importance. From beginning to end the Bible emphasizes the intense worth of personality. A recent book published in the United States retells the history of the Hebrews, without stress, and without violence to criticism, around the personalities of their great heroes and leaders. It would be almost impossible to do such a thing for India, so little worth has India set upon biographical chronicles. (2) The Bible gives a unique content to the idea of Deity. Though to the Hindu *neti neti*, it adds the Isaianic 'To whom then will ye liken ME, saith the

[15] Such as *Jn.* ii; see Vurtheim in the *Classical Quarterly*, April 1920 p. 92. Yet the Fourth Gospel loses its point if it is not regarded as an interpretation of a *genuinely historical* event. The Johannine Gospel and its Epistle are essentially anti-Docetic.

Lord,' yet the God of the Bible is neither a blank cheque nor a apricious mystery that is only to be feared. God may be described nly by analogy, but the analogies of the New Testament in par-icular are such that, as Glover has said, 'they make God intimate nd suggest a great exploration, an intimacy bred of the slow nd sure knowledge that intimacy gives.' I defy anyone to read gain that particular chapter of Glover's *Jesus of History* with-ut being fired by the same enthusiasm as that Psalmist who cried, This God is our God for ever and ever: He shall be our guide nto death.' (3) Above all, the Bible sets the standard for inter-reting all history as the clash and tension between human per-onality and the Divine Providence. There is a familiar anecdote f how General Gordon walked into his boys' club at Gravesend ne evening, picked up and opened a newspaper, and said, as he at down, 'Now, my lads, let's see what God has been doing to-ay.' That rather homely story could not have been told if Gordon ad been a Hindu.[16] It is not only the 'saving history' of the Jnique Divine Initiative in the Gospels which is of value and ignificance. From the Bible we can learn how the purpose of iod works in *all* history, and how the jugment and saving mercy f God descend upon all alike. Think of such memorable phrases s 'Thou art the man'; 'His heart was not perfect in the sight f the Lord his God'; 'Look how wide also the east is from the rest, so far hath He set our sins from us'; 'Because thou hast ejected the Lord, He also hath rejected thee from being kind.' n *Exodus* Joseph is made to say, 'As for you ye meant it for vil, but God meant it for good.' Isaiah represents Yahweh as postrophizing Asshur, 'Ho, Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and ie staff in whose hand is mine indignation.' The words would qually well describe some modern dictator ('howbeit he meaneth ot so, neither doth his heart think so'). The spirit of the Bible is n undercurrent in the foreign policy of Cromwell, Gladstone, eville Chamberlain, and Roosevelt.

Or if we turn to the New Testament we can find, in that most miliar of all parables, how by analogy the Living God is to be derstood as One Who, in His utter and eternal generosity, ivides to His sons all His possessions and gives them delegated eedom to use or misuse His treasures, from uranium to pheno-arbitone; and Who, when they have tasted the cup of carnal

[16] Thus, the narratives of St. Paul's missionary journeys, culminating in e story of his voyage to Rome, with its pregnant message, 'God hath given ee all them that sail with thee,' are only edifying if one believes in the ivine ordering of events. Notice, no literature of this sort is quoted in Mr. uxley's anthology.

liberty to its dregs, is ever ready to take the second step, and restore them with patient and self-negating love, once they have come to themselves and have discarded all misplaced confidence in their own efforts at autonomy. It is your story and mine, the plainest and most natural interpretation of the brilliant but desperate waywardness of the human race, and of the ceaseless and ungrudging liberality of the Heavenly Father.

Yes, the value of the Bible is undoubtedly there, and there is no message which, if persuasively and clearly proclaimed, can be of greater help and solace to our distracted world.

But may we say that our present method of using the documents is the one best fitted to bring home to people their essential lessons? I must leave to the next reader the discussion of this. I can only say here, as in duty bound, that I am gravely uneasy. There is a sub-Christian as well as a Christian way of using the Bible. I do not think that we have yet found the best way of making a suitable selection of passages for public reading. Neither table A nor table B seems to meet the case. Ought we perhaps to have fewer passages and more exposition? Or more paraphrases and abridgements? Or, like the Presbyterians, a new authorized translation of the Moffatt type? Ought we not perhaps to show the continuity of inspiration by an increasing use of non-Biblical lections? Ought we to be satisfied with the merely numinous or emotional appeal of high-sounding but imperfectly comprehended portions, since this is plainly a factor of diminishing value, and our Lord taught that we should love God with our minds? We certainly ought to recognize that ancient documents cannot be flung at people who are obsessed with the weight of contemporary events, without the risk of their failing to see their significance. But we certainly ought to stress that they are not so remote and ancient as they seem. We are still only some 58 to 60 generations away from the events of the Gospels, and that, as compared with the age of the earth or of humanity, is a mere episode. Moreover, ancient Antioch seems to have been very much like modern London or New York, and ancient Athens very similar to modern Oxford or Calcutta. If we find the category of incarnation difficult, we need to remember, on the one hand, that Mahatma Gandhi[17] is regarded by many pious Indians (and indeed not inappropriately) as an avatar of Vishnu, the Kindly One, while of Hitler the blasphemy was spoken, 'The Word was made Flesh.' 'There will come false Christs and false prophets . . .' The essential proclama-

[17] Recent evidence shows that a similar status is now being applied by some Hindus to Queen Victoria, whose statues are beginning to be the object of *puja*!

ions of the Bible are both fatally and blessedly relevant to our tomic age, with its impending terrors hardly less awful than those oreshadowed in Christian apocalyptic prophecy.

The crux of the situation is of course in the State schools, as our Messenger rightly discerns. No enthusiasm for teaching the Bible can be expected of teachers unless they know its significance, nd are allowed a free hand to use the results of reverent and onest critical studies.

Professor Burkitt summed it up at one of our Conferences that he Bible must be for us 'the instrument of criticism.' The impli-cations of this have yet to be grasped by the Christian public, who still think that criticism is only destructive, whereas it can be both iberating and enriching, if wisely employed.

Yet, whatever we decide to do, whether in school or church, I ope we shall not tarry. For judgment is ready to begin at the ouse of God.

HOW TO TEACH THE BIBLE

By R. Gladstone Griffith, M.A., author of *Jesus for Everychild*.

A GREAT deal must be assumed in an attempt to treat so large a subject within a small compass. When a prominent politi-ian is reported as referring to the advice given by Polonius to Laertes as a piece of Biblical counsel, the need for teaching the ext is apparent. It may also be taken for granted that Holy Scrip-ure shows the course of the divine revelation and '*containeth all hings necessary to salvation*' (Article VI). What, then, is the roblem which faces the parish priest? The difficulties with which he professional teacher has to deal are parallel, but it is the work f the parson with which this paper is primarily concerned. There s no device by which the clergy can instruct parishioners who refer 'the pictures' to church. The work of the ministry has lways been effective amongst a small number. Methods of evival that seek results through novelty and secular devices are seless in the long run; they debase the message of the Gospel nd fail to commend it. Neither stone made bread nor spectacular eaps are divine instruments of evangelism. John Wycliffe and ohn Wesley saw the difficulty in their day and found a solution. he one perceived the necessity of translating the Bible from the atin of the Vulgate into the English of the ordinary people, and he other devised a system of devotion and preaching admirably

fitted to his time in history. It is wise to learn from these two English Churchmen. For in many ways the language of the Bible sounds as strangely in the modern ear as did the Latin in the fourteenth century, and its message is as little appreciated as it was by Wesley's contemporaries. We have to construe a literature which sprang from a pre-scientific age into the idiom of our mechanical and more literal days. This is our principal work. Such constant factors in the ministerial task as the infirmities and shortcomings of human nature produce, need not occupy our attention, since the solutions are familiar.

The translation of the Scriptures from the original languages into English was a simpler task than that which confronts us because of its obvious necessity, whereas ours is largely unrecognized although the *Report of the Archbishops' Doctrinal Commission* (S.P.C.K., 1938; 2/6) should have made it obvious to the whole Church. This document is the charter of our constructive work; for it states explicitly what Biblical scholarship has established. What more admirable Prolegomena could be wished than these which occur on page 32?

(1) The authority ascribed to the Bible must not be interpreted as prejudging the conclusions of historical, critical and scientific investigations in any field, not excluding that of the Biblical documents themselves.

(2) Christian thinkers are not necessarily bound by the thought forms employed by the Biblical writers.

(3) The Biblical writings display a wide variety of literary type. In using the Biblical books as a standard of authoritative teaching, these facts must be taken into account. The supreme spiritual value of some parts of the Bible is not shared by all.

(4) In estimating the relative spiritual value of different portions of the Bible, the standard is the mind of Christ as unfolded in the experience of the Church and appropriated by the individual through the Spirit. That is to say, the stages of the Biblical revelation are to be judged in relation to its historical climax.

The Bible contains the answers to our problems, but it only makes them clear to persevering students.

The duty of the parish priest is to base his Biblical teaching on the sequence of thought displayed in the historic Creeds. The Prayer Book provides the skeleton for a year's instruction, whether the students are general worshippers, children, or members of a class. The first paragraph of the Creed summarizes the ethical monotheism of the Old Testament, and with special refer-

nce before Lent forms the general undertone of the year's course. The second and third paragraphs, expounding the Incarnation nd the work of the Holy Spirit, are roughly followed by the Prayer Book teaching from Advent to Trinity. The general instruc-ion of the rest of the year completes the cycle.

The parochial clergyman, commissioned to teach clearly and ttractively the faith which has been transmitted, is not called to ovelty, but to reiteration. But care has to be exercised to ensure hat familiar phraseology still bears the meaning intended by nose who first used it and that the mental pictures it provokes in ne modern mind are as appropriate as those which it aroused in he past. An archaic mode of expression may for lack of explana-.on convey a conception which is equally novel and false. Thus, o illustrate the majesty of the Creator by attributing to Him niraculous action which, if truly reported, would make Him both rbitrary and incompetent is not only futile, but misleading; be-ause scientific experience has established the unity of the world nd the uniformity of natural law. The Hebrew saw the loving-indness of Jahweh in deliverance from Egypt, but it would be a nistake to suppose that God denied His character to achieve it or roke His own laws in the natural world. The never-failing haracter of the divine provision for human need rests on the in-ariable working of natural law. Prayer changes the course of vents by the direction of human wills and affections. The pur-ose of God and His ordering of weather, crops, health or the equences which science traces are immutable. The Hebrew mind as little concerned with secondary causes and with the problems hich arise in a scientific age.

The confusion of thought which lies like a foul mist over the reater part of the Christian world derives its density largely from ailure on the part of the ministry to make this distinction between ne ancient and the new background, between the scientific and re-scientific mode of thought. Some ministers in all denomina-ons are ignorant of the facts, others are muddled in their naginations, and not a few have been over-wary of letting out the uth. Experience shows that the results of scholarship in the iblical field are welcomed equally by people in all walks of life nd of all ages. Sight may come to the blind with its attendant nd enthusiastic delight even at fourscore years. The fear of truth elling is ill concealed beneath the plea that the old-fashioned ust not be disturbed. Youth is under no illusions. It inquires hether the clergy believe in the miraculous and, more devastat-gly, whether they dissemble their real beliefs or whether they re merely ignorant. Knowledge must be steadily disseminated or

else, like over-stored electricity, it will burst in thunder and lightning over the land. All this is known to the priest who has practical experience of teaching in its various forms: from the pulpit, the lecture desk, the open-air rostrum and from daily converse with Everyman.

The teacher of the Bible must steer between the Scylla of an interpretation that is exclusively allegorical and the Charybdis of literalism. The one divorces religion from history whilst the other makes it irrelevant to daily experience. It has been well said that the Jews, if poor historians, are good story-tellers. The narratives about Moses in *Exodus* and about Elijah in *Kings* mark steps in the human apprehension of the divine nature. It makes little odds whether the details are strictly accurate in the historical sense. The genius of the Hebrew conveyed the truth about spiritual development in story form. To the rabbi any material is acceptable, whether fact or fiction, so long as it serves the didactic purpose he has in hand. Jesus made use of the parable and of kindred types of narrative, a use which the evangelists developed.

Probably the most searching test of ability to teach lies in work with boys and girls. It is essential to know definitely where we are dealing with history and where with something else. For the Christian the principal *foci* of interest are the accounts of the birth and resurrection of Jesus. The first presents little difficulty. The original Roman version of *Mark* shows Jesus as coming from a family at Nazareth which had little belief in His calling. The doctrine of the Incarnation can be surely built up on this Gospel, which probably reflects the teaching of St. Peter, and the poetry of *Matthew* and *Luke* can be shown to be a later development of the earlier tradition. The tenor of *Mark* is inconsistent with any other belief than that Jesus was the child of Joseph and Mary. Children so instructed will have nothing to unlearn. Jesus is completely human, and His humanity is the proper ground for the developed Christology of the Fourth Gospel: 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us' (i, 14). Herein lies a true mystery. The perfection of the human and of the divine natures in Jesus does not contravene experience; it transcends it and unites us thereby with God in a real manner. To discard in later life what has been learnt in childhood may produce a spiritual crisis; for the association of ideas leads to the rejection of the essential truth together with the shedding of the vehicle which carried it. Some natures take refuge in fundamentalism. In the matter of the Resurrection the Pauline account (*I Cor.* xv) provides the definite approach that is wanted. Here are the names of people whose word carried weight in their time. Children can easily appreciate

he smaller value of the later Gospel accounts, which are not easy o fit together, especially when they are told that the last page of *Mark* was lost. That the drive of the New Testament comes from he fact that Jesus had survived death and was alive can be taught vith convincing effect, whilst it may be admitted freely that the xact manner and place of the Resurrection are unknown to us. The basis of teaching with children should be to make sure that hey grasp the great historical features upon which the Christian evelation rests. Those elements of the tradition which lack reality vill fall into neglect if they are ignored and stress is laid where he foundation is sound..

The Bible has a religious value of its own, but the unique osition it occupies arises from its intimate connexion with the Church as the vehicle of the revelation and of the doctrine which hat body transmits. Modern scholarship is merely one of many ids to the propagation of the Gospel which does not alter as its node of presentation is adapted to fresh conditions. The Bible an only fulfil its peculiar function when it is used to teach the lements of the Christian faith which are outlined by the Creeds. The world is desperately hungry and thirsty for spiritual meat and drink. False theories of economics and politics have usurped the place of religion and have sapped men's vitality and dissipated heir energies. The Christian faith freed at last from the anti-quated trappings of tradition can have free passage. Or, to change he metaphor, a path has been cut and bridges built along which he evangelist may travel surely. This society has established tself and its principles within the larger community of the Church of England and its kindred denominations. The time has come when the knowledge and experience accumulated in half a century should be applied to the practical business of remoulding the forms in which the doctrine of the Church is expressed. Essays nave been and are being made in this field and they ought to be pressed to a definite end. Much of the setting of public worship and probably still more of the occasional acts, such as the Visita-ion of the Sick, are archaic and useless. A single illustration must suffice. There is no occasion to involve the truth that Christianity an satisfy the needs of all mankind in the winding-sheet of folk ore and legend. The story of the miraculous feedings of the multitude ought to be omitted from our liturgy with very much nore that is equally irrelevant to modern modes of thought.

Those parts of the New Testament which illustrate the human side of Jesus' character and show His religious teaching should nave greater prominence, those attempting to make Him a worker of wonders being eliminated from the Sunday readings. Lections

from the Pauline and Johannine teaching about such matters as prayer, union with God, and the spiritual foundation of life could be proportionately increased. The discretion which has been exercised for a long while in the choice of Old Testament passages could be extended with still wider freedom than it has been to the New.

No two parishes are alike and every parson will have his own way of teaching the Bible, so that it is idle to review in detail the methods of the pulpit, of the class, of children's services and so on. What is common to all Modernist ministries is the desire to teach truly and to teach clearly. The man who has faced the difficulties for himself will be unlikely to fail in conveying his own convictions to those committed to his pastoral charge. The technique of instruction, like many other aspects of the topic under consideration, is of great importance, but it cannot be dealt with now. The universe of discourse is here restricted for many reasons to the particular problem with which Modernists appear to be especially concerned at this period. The re-interpretation of the Bible in the idiom of modern thought and language is the supreme task of our age.

The task of translating the old terminology into its modern equivalents forms but one stage in the process of bearing effective witness to the universal belief of the Church that in the person of Jesus the world has seen God in terms of human nature. The opening phase of *St. Mark* indicates that the author wrote to show that the Incarnation was a fact in history, and the whole Bible is directed and centred on this conviction. Thus the study and knowledge of the Bible for its own sake, however valuable these may be, are quite secondary to the fundamental reason for teaching it and are overshadowed by the urgent necessity for its use as an instrument of evangelization. Church and Bible are in this respect complementary to each other. The rock upon which the Church is founded is the personal faith of the individual that Jesus is the Christ. To bring about this conviction is the ultimate function of Holy Writ. Unless the teacher is always alive to this he will never be completely successful. Let it be granted that apart from this purpose Biblical study may be of real value; for indeed '*didicisse fideliter artes emollit mores nec sinit esse feros*.' Yet the divine economy is based first and last upon personal relationship. The health of mankind and the well-being of the nations depend upon the right use of man's innate power for loyalty and service. We have seen this power directed to unworthy and wicked persons or distorted into more theoretical channels of obedience. The world is licking its wounds in consequence and will not be healed in a

hurry. The human capacity for love and devotion must be drawn towards the only King whose law is final and completely wholesome. Only in obedience to Christ do the many functions of human nature achieve the purposes for which they came into existence. Our religion is either completely right or else it is completely wrong. As much is implied in the accepted affirmations of the Creeds. If Trinitarian doctrine is true, the religion of Christianity is final and complete. So we believe it is.

Now, if the basis of teaching is necessarily intellectual, for learning facts and assimilating their immediate significance are mental processes, yet the human personality can only be separated into rational, emotional and conative parts in theory. The student who exercises his mental powers insensibly feels and wills in consequence of his feelings. The unique value of the Bible is not least marked in the perfection of the satisfaction which it gives to all human faculties. Seen in its entirety the Bible presents that balance and proportion which human agency can only produce under the divine inspiration. Hence the sanity of Christendom at its best and noblest.

The Bible sets forth history, an interpretation of history and a religious philosophy based upon these two, all of which are offered in vehicles of profound artistry. Rooted and grounded in the setting of a world background, within the limits of space and time, the divine revelation of the Bible rises from this world to one of a pure and infinite existence where the human spirit loses itself in mystery that transcends experience. This sense of wonder has been largely lost in the religious sphere, possibly because our fathers were wont to seek it in that which contradicted experience rather than in that which transcends it. Correct appreciation of the Biblical revelation will restore this essential feature in man's religious outlook. But past generations were right in laying emphasis on the urgent need for entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. Critical study of the Bible need not in the least lead, as with Loisy and some others, to a loss of personal touch with Christ, either historically or mystically. The whole nature of man, if balanced by true discipline and devotion, finds its satisfaction in a person. The Jesus of history is the basis of approach to the Jesus ascended to the heavenlies. The proof of the identity appears in the identity of the Biblical standard of life and devotion with the standards accepted absolutely and achieved partially in the lives of Christians. The spirit presented in the Bible answers to the daily life of prayer, and the results in character and in attendant action are always recognizable because they are true to a pattern that does not vary. Indeed the very faults of the Church and of Churchmen

are measured by the standards of that pattern, and sanctity is sought and attained in defiance of past failure and of ingrained evil. All this and much more depends in the last resort upon the teaching of the Bible, at home, in school and in church, in such a way as to induce a loyalty to Jesus which shatters all rival obediences and strengthens those natural ones which take their rightful but secondary places after that which He alone can fill. The only teaching of the Bible that will have permanently satisfactory result will be that which leads the student to see with Simon Peter that Jesus is the Christ and that he must follow Him.

LOVE AND EQUALITY

By Canon Ian Ramsey, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge.*

MY purpose in this paper will be to set before the reader some comments on the relation between Christian *love* and Christian *equality*, and then to suggest that their essential interdependence has some very real and practical bearings on the character and organization of contemporary society.

Christian love; *Christian* equality: like all Christian concepts their *raison d'être* lies ultimately in the Gospel, in the good news of God proclaimed in Jesus Christ. Like all Christian concepts, that is, they derive their special significance from the particular historical Act of God in Christ. Now that Act of God is to be seen as a culmination, as a climax, towards which the whole of our Old Testament points. All the more reason, then, if we would properly see the distinctive character of Christian love and Christian equality, why we should first take a glance at the rock whence they were hewn. Or, to change the metaphor, both have their roots in that prophetic insight which is the glory of our Old Testament.

I. Christian Love

Our understanding of Christian Love properly begins with the prophet Hosea, who used the love he had to an unfaithful and undeserving wife as a pattern of the love God has to His unfaithful and undeserving Israel. 'And the Lord said to me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of her friend and an adulteress, even as the Lord loveth the children of Israel'; 'When Israel was a child then I loved him'; and so, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.'[1] It seems almost Christian love already. But notice: while this 'hesed,' love,

[1] *Hosea* iii, 1; xi, 1; vi, 6.

nercy, active and undeserved loving-kindness is taken from a personal experience, it is predicated in *Hosea* of God and *Israel*—a nation and a group. There is, in *Hosea*, a certain implied and unresolved tension between the 'mercy' we are to practise to others *personally*, and the love God has to Israel as an *individual*.

It needed the personal sufferings of a Jeremiah, striving in lonely agonies with God; it needed an Exile which shattered a racial solidarity that had intrigued tribe and nation alike, to bring to the Old Testament the full significance of *personality*. But the emphasis on the group was transformed rather than lost. The love of God must certainly be directed to persons—henceforward none could forget that—but these persons must also be grouped as a 'faithful remnant,' a 'peculiar people,' and 'Israel of God.' The climax comes when this faithful remnant was Jesus Christ alone; directed to Him came the same redemptive and reconciling love, and from Him came, and in Him was initiated, a group of which He was the chief corner-stone. This was a *new* 'Israel of God,' the Church of Christ, a fellowship of the Spirit.

There in the briefest and to that extent inadequate outline is the biblical background to our understanding of Christian love. Two points follow at once:

(*a*) It is *personal*. Rightly in *Hosea* is it related to the most personal of all relations—sex. I could not agree, incidentally, that ἔρως, φιλία and ἀγαπη are to be rigidly distinguished. Christian love is a term comprehensive enough to include *all* personal relations—whether of sex, or of friendship, or of any other active, personal self-dedication. It is the love of the father for both the prodigal and elder son, which comes out to greet each, and which neither altogether deserves.

(*b*) It is *creative* and *determinative of fellowship*, and that in two ways: (1) the love of God, while towards individuals, is towards individuals in a community. That is the abiding truth in Old Testament ideas of solidarity, and it is implied in the concept of the Church as a new Israel continuous with the old, as the body of Christ who is its head. God sees His children as a family. (2) But the love of God *to us* is a love which calls *from us* a response, a response of love to God, and love to neighbour. It is a love to unite Jew and Samaritan. Never let us isolate that greatest of all passages on Christian love from its context in the Epistle. Christian *Agapé*, Love, Charity is recommended to the Church at Corinth as 'a still more excellent way,' by which to recreate their fellowship torn apart by intellectual dissension and moral laxity.

Christian love: personal and creative of fellowship. It presupposes, indeed, an organic unity of persons.

II. Christian Equality

'Equality' is a concept which at first sight seems altogether to be thought of in relation to Justice, and for the beginnings of Christian equality we might well, then, go to *Amos*. God as Just demanded men also to be just in their dealings with each other; and this demand implied that all men had an equal claim to consideration. The 'righteous sold for silver,' the needy, sold 'for a pair of shoes,'[2] are to be as important as those who sell them. Brunner in *Justice and the Social Order* emphasizes this intimate connection between Justice and Equality:

> '. . . justice is equality. Just treatment means the same treatment for all. An equal wage for equal work, equal praise for equal achievement, equal punishment for equal transgression, equal rights for equal burdens, an equal price for an equal amount of goods. There is good reason why the Latin word for just is *aequum* and why we express just dealing as "meting with the same measure."'

But in the same breath Brunner leads us to a difficulty:

> 'Justice [then] appears at first to be very simple, for what is simpler than equality? Equality and law both satisfy the demands of reason. This simplicity, however, is a mere semblance. Human beings are *never* equal. Equality of treatment is only possible because and in so far as actual inequality is set aside and disregarded as immaterial. Hence equality of treatment always implies a far-going abstraction.'[3]

The truth is that human beings are never in all respects equal; equality only refers to abstractive characteristics. The Archbishops of York and Westminster are 'equal' in being 'Archbishops'; Mr. Shinwell and Lord Salisbury in being 'men'; but it does not need great insight to discern striking differences between each pair.

Now because of this difficulty, and as Brunner points out later in the same chapter, many have followed Aristotle in making a distinction between what we may call 'arithmetical justice' and 'proportional justice.' Roughly, the difference is this. Supposing milk were granted to all Londoners, in all circumstances alike; then they would be, from that point of view, 'perfectly equal' and arithmetical — or numerical — justice would have been done. The recipients would be 'equal' just in the sense that they could be treated as arithmetical units, or as numbers on a card, or as factors of a 'milk demand.' They would be equal from the point of view of Food Office numerical abstractions.

Supposing now that priority milk is granted to some: for illness, children and so on. In this case the justice would be proportional — all would be treated 'alike,' but respect would have

[2] *Amos* ii, 6.

[3] E. Brunner, *Justice and the Social Order*. Lutterworth Press, 1945. pp. 29-30.

een paid in the assessment of likeness to factors which, viewed rom the original and higher abstractive level of 'London milk rinkers,' are '*in*-equalities.' We should in the second case be less bstract in our treatment, for we should begin to consider child- en, and the particular illnesses of human beings; but in a certain ense we should also be less just, and our treatment would cer- ainly be less 'equal.' To put it otherwise: the maxim 'to each his ue' is not necessarily the same as 'to each alike.'

The problem is this: *how are we to arrive at any concept of uman equality when what are so patently obvious are human in- qualities?*

There are two well-known answers:

(1) The first would give an analysis of equality which begins y accepting those very characteristics which, at first sight, seem o distinguish men. It would say that every man has all the capa- ities of human nature, but in some men some capacities remain nly 'potential.' As it has been expressed by a recent writer: Every man, from the very fact that he is a man, has all the capa- ities of human nature even though they are not all brought from otency to act.' But what is a 'potential capacity' that is never ctualized? Is it not just a piece of philosophical wishful-thinking, ntroduced to make a theory water-tight in face of embarrasing acts? Further, do we not in any case imply inequalities at the ext stage: inequalities, that is, between those capacities that find xpression, and those which do not?

True, there are circumstances which seem to favour the theory. here is the cotton-spinner or the pit-boy who becomes as efficient Cabinet Minister as those who have reached such office through ie usual channels; but can we believe such a goal to be *in some eal sense* possible for *all* spinners and pit-boys? Are not psycho- gical statistics pointing in a different direction? Not all classicists e good mathematicians, and *vice versa*, and the most gifted iblical critic might be a fool at engineering, as the finest engineer ight fight a losing battle with the ChalcedonianDefinition. Is it ot a little rash to suppose that every man could do every job qually well with anyone else, simply because some outstanding eople happen to be good all-rounders?

(2) In other days philosophers might have given another nswer. Behind all the inequalities of gifts and temperament, of eight and girth, there is (it would have been said) an 'inner self' hich is left in all its philosophical nakedness when the clothes of equalities have been stripped off. Such was, in effect, the 'sturdy individual' of John Locke, Rousseau, J. S. Mill and the rest. He

was an unchanging core, independent of all that which differentiates men. But I do not think we shall find either Locke or Rousseau or Mill of much help. For their 'sturdy individual' was really a metaphysical monstrosity, and David Hume showed as much. Nor was Kant much better; his phenomenal and noumenal selves live in a very uneasy partnership, if they are not in fact divorced. Indeed, to put this difficulty in political terms, the great tragedy of the liberal individualism of the nineteenth century was that, being based on Locke and Mill, it lacked any adequate philosophical background for its own defence; so that when attacks came from the side of Hegelian community-philosophies, from economic theory, science and general culture, its creaking Cartesian supports were hopelessly inadequate, and it perished.

What then remains?

(3) Much nearer the truth, it seems to me, comes Jacques Maritain, who urges that human equality relates primarily to the essential place of each human being in the human community. Inequalities are necessitated if we are to have a vital, living community. Water is static and stangant when it is all at the same level. It takes all sorts to make either a world or a Church. Again, heaven forbid that we should be married to our opposite number in the other sex. On the contrary, human inequalities are to be welcomed in principle, and human equality is rather to be analysed in terms of the particular and peculiar contribution of each member of a community to the general well-being. The following quotation from Maritain may summarize his point of view:

> 'The equality in nature among men consists of their concrete communion in the mystery of the human species,' and this 'concrete communion' is revealed 'in the common experience of misery, in the common sorrow of great catastrophes, in humiliation and distress, under the blows of the executioner or the bombs of total war, in concentration camps, in the hovels of starving people in great cities, in any common necessity' when 'the doors of solitude open and man recognizes man. . . At once the realness of equality and community in nature is revealed to him as a very precious thing, an unknown marvel, a fundamental basis of existence, more important than all the differences and inequalities superimposed upon it. . . . Christianity confirms and emphasizes the concrete sense of the equality in nature by affirming its historical and genealogical character.' We are 'heirs of the same sin and the same weaknesses, but heirs also of the same original greatness, all created in the image of God and all called to the same supernatural dignity as adopted sons of God, and to coheirship with Christ the Saviour. . .'[4]

There is Christian equality: but you see what has happened? *To understand Christian equality we have turned to Christian*

[4] J. Maritain, *Redeeming the Time* (Bles, 1943), pp. 15-16. Trans. H. L. Binsse.

ove. Let us approach the same conclusion now from our own background.

We have seen above that Christian equality must seek its personal reference away from any one or any group of human characteristics. Yet it must certainly not derive from the Locke-Mill tradition. It must be always an equality of persons; not of isolated individuals with arithmetical identity. We can now see that it must relate to a community, yet not compromise the person within that community. Where, then, is the concept which at one and the same time dignifies the person yet sets him necessarily within a community? The answer is: personal will. About a will there is something concretely personal, yet an isolated will is impossible—there is always (theoretically speaking) at least one other will with which it is in an organic unity.

To come to the point: Christian equality is an equality which belongs fundamentally to persons whose wills have responded to God's love, who have responded to adoption and become children of God, and whose love, like that of God, is constitutive of a community. So at the end the concept of Christian equality is linked with that of Christian love. Both relate to (*a*) God's love; (*b*) personal wills; (*c*) organic communities. Christian equality, far from being allied with justice, goes in the end much beyond *Amos*, along a path which begins, indeed, rather with *Hosea*. Christian equality is not to be interpreted in terms of a justice which is either arithmetical or proportional. It is not arithmetical individualism; it is not potential identity of individual human characteristics. But it is to be interpreted in terms of a fundamental ontological feature of human beings—their personalities as human wills, towards which God's will in love extends. *Human beings are, for the Christian, 'equal' because each is an object of that love of God in Christ which does not differentiate between its objects.* Its objects are all the 'same.' None of them deserves or earns God's love any more than any other. All this is really an analysis of what is meant by saying, more concisely, that Christian equality is equality of value in the sight of God.

III

There is the general background: what of its bearing on the character and organization of society? Notice again: Christian love and Christian equality alike demand an emphasis on (*a*) individual wills, and (*b*) an organic community. Men are 'equal,' in the Christian sense, because of their essential possession of personal wills, which are weaned by God into a fellowship whose

bonds are love, human and divine. To these principles it would seem that there are two main corollaries :

(A) *A Christian society need not be afraid of Communal experiments, or of a Communal emphasis.* For Christian equality, Christian love, indeed the very character of God Himself, stresses a truth we see beginning in the Old Testament and developing in the New Testament — the truth that God's dealings are with '*persons-in-groups*.'

Consequently there are two sorts of economic policy bound, in the long run (however long), to be disastrous : (1) a 'private enterprise' which ignores the mutual dependency of human beings — their 'community in nature' — and also the sanctity of the human *will*; (2) a 'public control' which planning for community, confuses the person and the individual, and forgets that the units of reality are personal wills in fellowship.

Sound economic policy, so it would seem, must resemble the wisdom of the Church of England : 'to keep the mean between the two extremes.' In this connection we may allow ourselves some general comments.

It is not without significance that the whole world is becoming more communal-minded. Organized and controlled social experiments and reforms may well be an unavoidable necessity. If so, with our background, we would emphasize that *there can be good bureaucracy*. There is no necessary conflict between bureaucracy and love. Or better, since there is no Big Bad Man called 'Bureaucracy,' there can be good bureaucrats, and bureaucrats may also be lovers.

Indeed, on the contrary, there is something fundamentally un-Christian in the old idea of the isolated individual — the idea which was behind Locke, Rousseau, Mill and the rest. It was behind, too, much Whig tolerance — for nothing is easier than to be tolerant towards those with whom we have no effective contact whatever. Our contemporary world needs a new tolerance which, while being concerned for the things of itself, will equally strongly seek also to embrace diversity in Love. We need it nowhere more than in the problems of race — Jew and Arab, negro and white.

(B) *Nevertheless, any society inspired by Christian ideals must always give place to, and provide for, the activity of personal wills.* Wills must be kept exercised and society must offer to all an opportunity to develop creative activities.

We have just urged that there can be good bureaucrats; it is now obvious what makes a *bad* one. This is when the bureaucrat

not only uses numbers to classify people, but uses people as if they were nothing more than classified numbers. All the time, and as society becomes more organized, more and more must we emphasize the need for personal love and action within it. Yet it is clear that social experiments made by the State do not necessarily preclude personal relationships. There may be the officious counter-clerk, but there is also the human counter-clerk who, even if his business is State-owned, can be every whit as personally solicitous for our welfare.

Again, in education, we often hear of 'equality for all.' But what is our ideal of equality? Do we believe that to all belong the same human possibilities? Hardly, after what we have said in II (1). Education must rather develop the will; it must never cramp, or frustrate or atrophy; but the best education will also secure the best harmonization of the individual and society. All this may well imply a very different estimate in the future of the relative values of different work. But we need not be alarmed. The priority of mental over manual labour is not necessarily God's law — it is more Greek than Jew, maybe, and the Descartes worship of the isolated, pre-eminent thinker gives plausibility to the superstition, but superstition it may still be.

Another feature of our lives is the place now given to psychological tests, which have found their way into every sort of selection board, from officers to ordinands. The 'personal interview' tends to become 'impersonal classification.' True, the dangers are partly avoided by 'week-end meetings,' but, all the same, as physchological generalizations come more and more to be used in human relationships, we need more and more to be careful to avoid thinking of people as abstractions.

We may now summarize in the most general sociological terms the implication of the background I have given above. What I am really advocating is a community-centred liberalism, which preserves something of the old individualism of the liberal but sees that individual as essentially set within a community. Alternatively expressed, in terms more theological than political, and perhaps more suggestive than precise, we are urging a synthesis of the Protestant idea of the individual and the Catholic idea of society.

If all this seems very theoretical, and out of touch with ordinary life, let us come to earth. For the best training ground where we shall learn Christian love and equality is where charity begins — at home, in the family. There we learn the activities we are to practise and develop outside, if we are to attain social well-being; for there we know and treat with 'persons-in-community.' In the

presence of wife and children we do not forget community; with wife and children we do not deal with abstractions.

To summarize: Christian equality is based on Christian love, not justice. It is justice which makes abstractions of men; it is 'perfect justice' which makes man the most perfect fool. It is justice, with her abstractions, which lies behind bad bureaucracy.

Christian equality, relating to Christian love, suggests to us that it is possible to have a communal emphasis, a broad planning, a bureaucracy, which does *not* injure or insult human personality; that we may have civil and ecclesiastical administrators who are men also of human sympathy; that we may preserve our personalities though we stand in a bureaucratic community. Let us not talk as though these things were *impossible*. Why? Because they *are* possible, where there is *Agapé* or Charity. The story is told of the clergyman who sent back a rhododendron instead of a baptismal form asked for. May I put my point in a further question? Why not send back a rhododendron *and* a form? It may be said that forms always imply 'inquisitorial methods.' Often they do; but *need* they? May they not very often help administrative efficiency, and why should they not be associated with Charity as much as the rhododendron? That they are not at present, I agree. But need we continue in this state? Can we not hallow bureaucracy? Why not?

I do not know whether the Church or State needs more administration or less; I do not know whether the future will bring more planning or less. But I am sure that both Church and State could do with a good deal more of that which is 'the very bond of peace and of all virtues'—of that personal Charity without which whatsoever liveth—be it Food Office or Church Council, Church Assembly or Ministry of Fuel; whatsoever liveth, bureaucratic or not—is, like Marley's ghost, dead as door nails.

LOVE AND FORCE

By the Rev. C. F. Russell, B.D., F.S.A., sometime Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge; late Headmaster of Merchant Taylors', Crosby.

WHEN we speak of Christian love, what do we mean? Perhaps we should answer that we mean that love which for nearly two thousand years Christians have recognized as the supreme virtue that is taught by their religion, love of the same quality and greatness and strength as that which was manifested to the world by Jesus Christ. The answer would be true so far as it went, but it would not go far enough. For Christ taught that such love was the central quality in the character of God; and the statement of an early disciple, whether St. John or another, that 'God is love,' is probably regarded by us all as taking us nearer to the heart of God than any rival definition. But God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. If He is love, He has always been love. It was because He 'so loved the world'—loved it already—that He sent His Son. 'Herein was the love of God manifested,' but it had existed all the time. So Christian love, even if it has been known to men only for the short space of nineteen centuries, and although it could not at any rate have been called by that name before Christ was born, was certainly not in itself a new thing in the universe. It had been there always, whatever it was called, and whether men perceived it or not. It was the Love Divine, all loves excelling. It was the love which had been revealing itself in greater or less measure to men of old when they spoke such words as these: 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him'; 'How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel?' 'Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, and should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city?'

Not a new thing in the universe. Yes, and this really is a UNIverse, whether we remember it or not. We have our being in a system which, in all its parts and in all its duration, is the expression of a single will and a single purpose, and which, in so far as we have eyes to see it, is a revelation of that will and that purpose. Our world is marred by the sin and the folly of men, but the Divine plan and method are not thereby removed beyond our vision, and

they are the plan and the method of the God who loves, and has always loved, the world with the perfection of what we now call Christian love.

Let me approach my subject from a somewhat different point of view. Why do we accept Christ as our supreme and final teacher in ethics and religion? Some people, no doubt, would say that we do this because we believe that He is Divine, or that He is the Son of God and the revelation of the Father. It seems to me that that would be an inversion of the true order — that it would be what in common phrase we call 'putting the cart before the horse.' Surely, we do not believe that the teaching of Jesus is good and true because we recognize Him as divine, but we recognize Him as divine because we see in Him what we believe to be perfect goodness, and hear from Him what we believe to be the highest truth. And that means — must mean — that we have standards of goodness and truth already, before we see and hear Him. We test His life and His words by those standards, and because they pass the test with a completeness which is unique, we believe that He reveals God to us. If in any respect He did not pass the test, we should not simply say, 'Because He is divine, our standards must have been wrong,' but we should feel instinctively that there was a difficulty which needed further investigation.

There was once a Bible printed in which, by an accident, the word 'not' was left out in the seventh commandment. It was called, as you know, the Wicked Bible. Now imagine someone reading that Bible who had never read any other — someone who had been taught that the Bible was the Word of God and who held in its most uncompromising form the old theory of verbal inspiration. Do you suppose for a moment that he would rise from his reading of the Decalogue and say, 'I have all this time been neglecting one of the commands of God. I must go and commit adultery at once'? We know very well that in spite of his conviction that the Bible was the Word of God, and in spite of his conviction that every word of it was directly inspired, he would do nothing of the kind. He would say, 'There's some mistake here.' He would have standards to which even the Bible must conform. And it is so with Christ Himself. When commentators have been at pains to explain that His addressing His mother as 'Woman' at Cana of Galilee was not disrespectful; or that His permission to the demons at Gadara to enter into the swine was justified because swine were unlawful property for a Jew, or because one man is of greater value than two thousand pigs; or that His cursing the barren fig-tree was not an instance of petulant disappointment or bad temper — when commentators, I say, have been at pains to explain

such things, they have been implicitly admitting what I am now emphasizing — that even Christ Himself stands at the bar of our judgment as regards both His conduct and His teaching, and that it is because our judgment approves both that we acknowledge His divinity.

But if these standards were there before men heard of Christ, how did they come to be there? Once more we are driven back to the fact that before Christ came, barely two thousand years ago, there had been half a million, or maybe a million, years during which God — God who is and has always been Love — was gradually training men in the principles of righteousness through their necessity for the well-being of society. By the time that Jesus of Nazareth was born, these principles, in their fundamental elements, had been so convincingly proved and so long established that their rightness was hardly questioned. Their acceptance had already become so much a matter of course that to-day, in looking back, some moralists ignore the age-long experience on which it rested, and speak of it as due to an 'intuitive' sense of right.

Of course, when I say that these principles were generally accepted, I am not saying that they were universally practised. They were no more universally practised then than they are now. But then, as now, men gave them their lip-service, and — what is far more significant as evidence of their general acceptance — those people who did not find it convenient to practise them always hoped that their neighbours would do so in their dealings with themselves. Everywhere and always, to-day as in the past, the liar hopes that other people will tell him the truth, and the thief hopes that other people will treat him honestly, and indeed he is often greatly shocked and very indignant if they don't.

You see, I expect, how all this bears on my subject to-day. If Christ has been for nineteen centuries the great Teacher, it is no less true that God Himself has been for five thousand centuries the great Trainer, of mankind; and if Christ is the supreme example in a human life of what we call Christian love, God is the source and fountain-head of all love, and His methods of training men must exhibit and expound the meaning of love as truly as the death of Christ on the Cross. It is no answer to this to say that in those remote days men did not understand what true love meant. Perhaps they did not, *but God did*. It is not the actions of men that I am asking you to consider, but the method of God. He had to deal, as He still has to deal to-day, with men whose love was feeble and poor; but His love was not feeble or poor, it was as strong and deep and true as when the words were first written, 'God so loved the world.'

So when I address myself more directly to the question, 'Does Christian love forbid the use of force?' it re-shapes itself in my mind into something like this: 'Has the method of force been employed in God's training of men through the countless ages of human life?' If we believe that it has, then the broad question of *principle* is settled for us once for all, unless we are prepared to assert that in respect of His love God is not quite up to the standard of the best Christians.

Let us look for a few minutes at the Old Testament, though I may say at once that I do not think we shall find its help decisive in the matter. We can certainly affirm this at least, that there is no doubt what the Old Testament writers themselves thought on the subject. In the early traditions at the beginning of Genesis, we have the expulsion from Eden and the story of the Flood. As we read further, we come to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the Plagues of Egypt, the plague of serpents in the wilderness, the earthquake and fire after the rebellion of Korah, and so on. In the later history there is the constantly recurring belief that conquest or oppression by a foreign power was deliberately sent by God as a punishment for national sin. Perhaps the most striking passage of this kind is in the fourth chapter of Amos, where the prophet rehearses a series of such divine acts: 'I have given you want of bread in all your places, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. And I have withholden the rain from you, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt, your young men have I slain with the sword, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have overthrown some among you, as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!'

But I have said already that I do not think the Old Testament evidence is decisive either way. We may feel that it has little importance for our purpose, and that perhaps we ought to ignore it altogether. For it is all second-hand. It does not prove that God used the method of force in His training of the Hebrews, but only that their historians and prophets and psalmists thought so; and it is possible that they were wrong. Their statements are open to the criticism that they may be attempts to interpret ordinary natural and political happenings in accordance with a theory of divine rewards and punishments which took too much for granted. The Plagues of Egypt may have had nothing to do with the servitude of the Hebrews; the drought in the reign of Ahab may not have been

caused by the Phoenician worship that was introduced along with the Phoenician queen; the westward thrust of Assyria, or of Babylon, might have destroyed the independence of Samaria or Judah even if the prophets had had no complaints to make of national immorality or irreligion. Perhaps the connexion between the disaster and the sin to which the writer ascribed it was as much the figment of his imagination as it was in the statement of a well-known bishop thirty-odd years ago that the war of 1914 had been sent by God to punish our nation for its drunkenness.

Yet after this has all been admitted, it seems to me that something still remains on the other side. Whatever we have to say about the particular illustrations which Amos gives (to take that one example), we can hardly deny the contention implicit in his teaching that the rottenness of the social life and the corruption of religion had destroyed the possibility of national unity, and so had made the northern kingdom an easy victim whenever the enemy should appear at the gates. So also with Jeremiah, and the danger from Babylon. The people were contributing, by their sin, or it may have been sometimes by their ignorance, to produce the disasters which came upon them.

And that is exactly in accord with what we find when, attaching no special importance (for the reason I have mentioned) to the statements of Old Testament writers, we take a wider and a longer view. God's training of men, as it seems to me, has always been training by experience; and I would go further and say that I cannot conceive any other possible method by which He could train men in the fundamental virtues, and in the elementary details of daily conduct, unless we are to postulate mysterious divine voices or mysterious divine writings which are in some way self-authenticating although by hypothesis they are against a background of practically nothing at all. How could men have found out that this particular berry was good for food and that one was poisonous, except by trying both, and being poisoned when they ate the wrong kind? How could they have discovered that it was wiser to build a house on a rock than on sand except by finding that if they did the latter the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and smote upon that house and it fell? How did the people dwelling in a country liable to floods learn the importance of regular systematic and far-seeing work in keeping the dykes in order, except by experience of the disasters which followed their neglect? You will say, perhaps, that these things are just matters of common sense and ordinary prudence; but it is by the same method that mankind has learnt the fundamentals of what we call morality. Truthfulness, faithfulness to contract, honesty, justice,

respect for human life, kindness, sobriety — these have established their claim bit by bit with the growth of men's experience of the effects which the opposite types of conduct produce on the social life of the community. I do not know how far back we should have to go in human history to find men beginning for the first time to look ahead in regard to the security of their food supply, but we can have no doubt that the need for it was learnt in the hard school of want and starvation and death; and if to-day we regard idleness, and improvidence, and waste, as morally wrong, we owe those convictions to the hard and bitter experience of our ancestors milleniums, or it may be scores of milleniums, ago.

Perhaps I may be allowed to pause for a moment to point out what looks like an important consequence of all this. I referred just now to the possible criticism that some of the things to which I alluded were in fact only matters of common sense; and it may be suggested that in such things at least no painful experience is needed to impress the requisite lesson. No one but a fool, I may be told, would ever have thought it a good plan to build his house on sand, or could have supposed that the community would continue to have enough to eat if it did not continue to work. Such things are demonstrable propositions, of which you can easily convince anyone while he sits in his armchair. It is true that these are demonstrable propositions, but I believe it is a mistake to suppose that because they can (as we now think) be proved on grounds of reason they would ever have established themselves by that means alone. Our modern civilization provides a crucial instance of this. The interdependence of work and food was established as an obvious truism thousand of years ago; but for a variety of reasons, such as the development of international commerce, the vast organization of transport, the extension of social services, it has come about in the last generation that this interdependence is less obvious than it used to be to the average individual. For many months now the economic condition of the country has made it of vital importance that it should be once more understood by everyone. So we have had a variety of slogans like 'Work or Want,' each of which in turn has stirred people up for a few days until its novelty had worn off. Surely, if appeals to common sense and reason, if quiet argument in an armchair, could do the trick, it would have been done by this time, when it was only a matter of re-affirming a doctrine which for countless generations had been unquestioned. It looks, however, as if certain sections of the community, having once forgotten the old lesson, will never relearn it until the old method has operated once more, and the grim alter-

lative Want has actually come true. And this method is one which God, the God of Love, always has in reserve.

But even if my account of the divine method of training is broadly accepted, the question may be asked whether it is fair to call it a method of 'training by force.' Why not just call it 'training by the experience of consequences'? Training by force suggests, does it not? training by mean of an arbitrary external force, having no essential connexion with the lesson to be learnt, as if we flogged a man to teach him honesty. I agree, of course, that in the divine processes to which I have called your attention there is nothing arbitrary and external like that, nothing which is not connected — essentially connected — with the matter in hand. But I do not agree that they are for that reason any less a method of training by force. Force is force, whether it is arbitrary or not, whether it is external or not. This divine lesson is driven home by pains and penalties which are self-acting, being attached to certain kinds of conduct in the very framework of the universe, but the man who is up against them is certainly up against the power of God.

And now, for what remains of my time, I must consider very briefly how all this stands in relation to the teaching of the Gospels. Have I constructed a picture of love which is somehow difficult to reconcile with the love of Christ on the Cross? There are three main things which I wish to say under this head.

(1) In the first place, the common and popular representation of Christ as invariably gentle and soft in His treatment of sinful men is a travesty of the truth. His methods varied with the sinners; and, to take one particular case, the story of Zacchaeus does not show how sympathetically and gently He dealt with sinners but only shows how sympathetically and gently He dealt with Zacchaeus. On other occasions His words might be of quite another sort, as for example: 'Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?' 'Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you saying, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.' 'It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye make it a den of robbers.' 'Hypocrites, ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is become so ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves.' 'Hypocrites, like unto whited sepulchres, full of all uncleaness.' 'Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?'

It creates a wholly false idea of the character and work of Christ to ignore His severity and sternness. He was gentle — invariably gentle, I think — with the sinner who was penitent; and

even in dealing with those who were not obviously penitent He was gentle when the failure was due rather to weakness than to a deliberate choice of evil. But against sins like the misuse of power, the betrayal of a sacred trust, injustice, cruelty of whatever kind, physical or mental, hypocrisy, cant, the employment of the forms of piety as a cloak to conceal the habitual disregard of elementary virtues — against such sins as these His words were uncompromising and blazed forth His condemnation. Perhaps one reason why often so little emphasis has been laid on the severity of our Lord's denunciations is that it is impossible to quote examples of His sternness without showing very clearly that in His judgment the worst sins were not 'sins of the flesh' but the sins of highly-placed ecclesiastics.

(2) The second thing I wish to urge is that the teaching of Christ about peace seems to be very commonly misunderstood. The peace He gives is peace in the heart, not the outward peace which the world thinks of. When He refers to that outward peace, He has something very different to say. 'Think not that I came to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace but a sword.' We allow the plain meaning of this to be confused by the beatitude on the peacemakers, and especially by the song of the heavenly host, 'Peace on Earth,' and Isaiah's Messianic title, 'Prince of Peace.' But that external peace may not always and of necessity be a good thing is clear from those words, 'I came not to send peace but a sword.' He could never have said, 'I came not to send righteousness but unrighteousness,' or 'I came not to send truth but falsehood,' for righteousness and truth are fundamental elements in the conditions which constitute the Kingdom of God. Outward peace, then, is not *constitutive* in the same way, but it is something that is best conceived as a by-product, something that will be found to have come when the Kingdom of God has been established. Peace is good, like happiness; but to aim at peace, as at happiness, is the surest way of missing it. If a community aims in all things at righteousness, it can hardly fail to be happy; but if it aims in all things at happiness, it is not likely to go far on the path of righteousness, or of happiness either. So the only way in which outward peace can be securely established among communities or individuals is by every member following after righteousness and justice and truth, and it is only if we all seek first God's righteousness that other things like peace will be added unto us. Christ is the Prince of Peace in the sense that His rule, universally accepted, is the way and the only way of establishing peace; but not in the sense that peace is always and necessarily good for its own sake in present conditions.

(3) And this leads me to my third and last point. Our actions, ur decisions are always in view of particular circumstances and onditions, which we accept and to which we adjust ourselves, lthough there may be much in them that we do not like or approve. f you carry an umbrella on a wet day, you do not do so because here is something excellent-in-itself in carrying an umbrella, but ecause it is suitable to the conditions. If we really all believed hat there was something intrinsically excellent in walking about nder umbrellas, we should do so on fine days as well as wet. This haracteristic of human action is so obvious that you are probably ondering why I should take the trouble to mention it. I mention because, when it comes to serious ethical discussion, there are eople who seem ready to pronounce conduct to be wrong unless is 'right for its own sake.' They ignore the alternative possiility that without being right for its own sake it may be right in the rcumstances. Food rationing is not desirable for its own sake, s we probably all agree; but that does not mean that it is anything but right in existing circumstances, and to call it wrong for hich a reason would be absurd. Mental hospitals and prisons are ot established because the idea of them is inspiring and beautiful; they were good-in-themselves we should all look forward to eing lots of them in heaven; but that does not mean that they are nything but right in our present social conditions. Now it is as ue of Jesus Christ as of anyone else that His actions were adsted to the circumstances in which He was placed. Yet this is ntirely overlooked or ignored by many people who are fond of sking questions like, 'Can you imagine Him doing so-and-so?' hey describe an action *in vacuo*. They ask, 'Can you imagine im knocking a man down?' presenting us with a mental picture Christ walking up to some peaceable pedestrian and hitting him ithout motive or provocation. If, however, the conditions are early stated, instead of being replaced by a vacuum, the question hich most of us would be inclined to ask is rather, 'Can you agine Him *not* knocking the man down?'

Suppose He was walking along a lonely country road in Engnd and came upon a strong and lusty man mercilessly kicking a ild on the head. I do not believe there is anyone in this conferce or outside it who thinks that He would just stand there sayg, 'Please, please, don't,' while the child was being kicked to ath.

Let us make no mistake: as soon as we have asserted it *as a inciple* that Christian love forbids the use of force, we must be ady to apply it to every case. If a man in a crowded picture galry produces a knife and starts cutting some priceless painting

into strips, the crowd may beg him to desist, but if he takes no notice there is nothing more for them to do. If someone jumps up in this hall now, seizes his neighbour by the throat, and tries to strangle him, we may gather round him and tell him that we strongly disapprove of his cruelty, and that he ought to be ashamed of himself, but to do more than that would be contrary to Christian love.

These concluding remarks may seem to you fragmentary and rather hackneyed. My purpose in making them is simply to give you some of the reasons which convince me that when I take as the canonical example of Christian love the age-long method by which God has trained and is still training mankind, I am not contradicting the words which at the end of these days He has spoken unto us in His Son.

LOVE AND WEALTH

By the Rev. Eric W. Brewin, M.A.

R. H. TAWNEY in his book *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* writes :

> ' When the age of the Reformation begins, economics is still a branch of ethics, and ethics of theology ; all human activities are treated as falling within a single scheme.'

The mediaeval synthesis which Mr. Tawney so lovingly describes allowed probably too little independence to political and economic life, but so disastrous have been the effects of the abdication of religion from the economic sphere that in the interests of both economic and religious life, a new synthesis needs to be worked out such as will commend itself to both theologians and economists. This paper is given in the hope that it may stimulate others better qualified to work towards such a synthesis.

Since we must first be clear about what precisely is the Christian teaching on the subject of material wealth, I would like to begin by reminding you of Christ's own attitude. As we read what He says on the subject of money, we cannot help feeling amazed and not a little embarrassed both by how much He has to say, and by the vehemence of His hostility to wealth. ' How hardly,' He says, ' shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God.' ' It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.' Again, ' Whosoever he be that renounceth not all that he hath cannot be my disciple.' ' Woe unto you that are rich for ye have received your

onsolation. Woe unto you that are full now, for ye shall hunger.' Nowhere do our Lord's words come nearer to contempt than in ne parables of the Rich Fool and of Dives and Lazarus, and in ne latter parable, we notice that there is no crime alleged against Dives beyond the fact that he had not scrupled to accept great nequality of wealth and all that it entailed.

What are we to make of these most 'uncomfortable words'? As Rauschenbusch has said, 'It gives a touch of cheerful enjoyment to exegetical studies to watch the athletic exercises of interpreters when they confront these sayings of Jesus about wealth.' For instance, Dr. E. F. Scott in his *Ethical Teaching of Jesus* suggests that the impression of hostility to wealth is largely due to distortion of the original teaching of Jesus at the hands of Luke. It is true that a remarkable number of sayings hostile to wealth found in *St. Luke* are absent from *St. Matthew*, and that where both record the same saying the Lucan version is usually much the more bitter. Nevertheless the charge of distortion cannot be convincingly maintained when all three Synoptic Gospels record the strongest saying against riches, the saying about the camel; all relate that the disciples left all to follow Jesus; and *Matthew* and *Mark* both speak of 'the deceitfulness of riches,' a phrase not found in *Luke*.

Other theologians have treated these 'hard sayings' of Christ as 'counsels of perfection.' We are told that they are examples of Oriental exaggeration and that we must make allowance also for ne deep vein of apocalyptic teaching. It is indeed highly probable nat the tribulation that Christ saw ahead did affect His teaching nd may have led Him to urge the disciples to free themselves om encumbrances, but even behind obvious apocalyptic utterances lie social principles which are valid no matter what the time circumstance because they are intrinsic to right relations between an and man, and man and God. For instance, it is always true at the amassing of wealth is a despicable goal, dangerous to oneself and to one's fellow men. Luxurious living saps a man's moral ore and corrupts his judgment, while the power which wealth ves breeds the desire for more power and tempts a man more and ore into, often quite unwittingly, treating others as not ends in emselves, but simply as means to his own ends. Again, great equality of wealth is almost invariably an insuperable barrier right relationships between man and man, tempting the rich to ink of themselves as a privileged class and creating in the poor n inferiority complex or, if not that, distrust, suspicion and tent, if not overt, hostility. That Christ had every reason to

regard wealth as a great obstacle to the Kingdom no acute observer of human relationships would for a moment deny.

This, however, is not to express agreement with the school of St. Francis who sought to identify Christ's teaching with asceticism. Christ never taught that the path to spirituality lies in a severance of ties with the material world. Speaking of food, drink and clothing, He said, 'Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.' Nowhere does He suggest that there is any religious value in poverty as such; no doubt He was too keenly aware of its crippling effects on the soul. It was not poverty, or any other outward condition, that Christ was demanding, but the right inward spirit. Nevertheless, renunciation of wealth always delighted Him, and for some He saw it was a spiritual necessity. But, as is made clear in the parables of the Talents, the Pounds and the Unjust Steward, it was not so much the possession of money to which Christ objected as the failure to make the *right use* of it.

We are led, then, to the crucial question, 'What is the *right use* of money according to Christ?' Some will say that the Christian teaching is simply that money should be regarded as a means and not as an end. But what statement could be more fatuous? No one, except a miser or someone mentally deficient, ever regards money as an end in itself. It is always regarded as a means to something else, generally increased comfort or security, superior social position or greater power over others. The important question, therefore, is 'What end did Christ teach that money should serve?' To this question the answer is clear. Money should be used as a means towards 'seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.'

The key to understanding Christ's teaching about material wealth lies in His demand for single-mindedness in the service of God and our fellow men. All our resources, material as well as spiritual, must be devoted to that end. Admittedly, the important things in life are not material but spiritual — friendship, love, joy and fellowship with God; but money can and must be made to serve these ends. In fact our attitude to money is a mirror which reveals the dominant motive in our life, making clear whether it is God who rules our life or His deadly rival, mammon, the anxious and insatiable desire for more, the desire to be rich. For unless we put God first we are putting Him nowhere, but merely attempting to use Him to give a veneer of respectability to a life actually devoted to something else.

To see Christian teaching about material wealth, however, in its full richness and depth of insight, we must look back to the Old

Testament and forward to the teaching of the Church Fathers. There is a great deal of truth in the statement that, whereas adversity seems to be the blessing of the New Testament, prosperity is the blessing of the Old. There is one strand in the Old Testament which regards wealth and prosperity as a mark of the Divine blessing, nevertheless in the Prophets and in the Pentateuch, there is a profound suspicion of wealth and its effects. In virtue of the Covenant relation, the Israelite had a vivid sense of a Divine sanction behind social duties. In the presence of a God, who through His agents, Nature and Man, is creator and upholder of all things, individual property rights over land, as over faculties of body and mind, were regarded as no more than relative, derivative, and conditional, being subject always to the rights both of the nation and of God.

The social law of the Pentateuch was expressly designed to prevent the exploitation of the poor and the consequent growth of a landless proletariat. That all families should be secured in the enjoyment of some portion of the material resources of this earth which is the Lord's was the idea behind the ordinance of both the year of Jubilee and the Sabbatical year. By the former, it was required that every fifty years land which had changed hands was to revert to its original owners, thus preventing the violation of the Divine Will by the expropriation of the poor and the accumulation of large estates in the hands of the rich. The latter law provided both for the poor from the land as it lay fallow in the seventh year, and for the release of the Hebrew from bondservice. Thus it is made quite clear that it is the Divine wish that in the economic sphere the law of life normally operative, namely, that 'unto him that hath shall be given and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath,' should be deliberately restrained by legislation designed to secure to each his birthright as a son of God.

Nor do we find any real divergence of views on material wealth when we turn from Jesus and the Old Testament Prophets to the early Church and the Church Fathers. St. Paul calls the love of money 'the root of all evil' and charges men that are rich that they be ready to distribute, willing to share.' The voluntary possession of all things in common, by which the Early Church gave expression to Christian love, even though it could not have lasted, nevertheless as Archbishop William Temple maintained 'supplies the norm and standard for a Christian ordering of society.'

Admittedly, Christianity accepted the institution of private property as a condition of social life, but it changed the whole perspective and emphasis of men's thoughts about it, and what is

more important, their instinctive feelings towards it. Two things it took as axiomatic. First, the incomparable value of persons as compared with property and, secondly, that property rights are strictly limited and entirely subordinate to the purposes of God and the welfare of society as a whole.

The *locus classicus* of the Christian idea of property during the second century A.D. is found in *The Preaching of Peter*:

> 'Understand, then, ye rich, that ye are in duty bound to do service, having received more than ye yourselves need. Learn that to others is lacking that wherein you superbound. Be ashamed of holding fast what belongs to others. Imitate God's equity and none shall be poor.'

In *The Shepherd of Hermas* we read that to know of men in great distress and not to rescue them is to be guilty of their blood. 'Instead, then, of fields, buy ye souls in distress.' The Christian should accept for himself no more than a modest sufficiency. The same note we find in the teaching of the Apologists for, 'wherein any can do good to his neighbours and does it not, he shall be reckoned alien to the Lord's love.'

In the third century A.D. Clement of Alexandria taught that there was no Christian justification for the man who 'goes on trying to increase wealth without limit, ever on the outlook for more, with his head bent downwards,' and he goes on to observe that 'it is impossible that one in want of necessaries of life should not be harassed in mind and lack leisure for the better things.' Tertullian speaks of 'fellowship in property' as the true social expression of Christian love. Two similar important ideas found in Cyprian's writings are further developed by Lactantius who wrote just before the Edict of 313 A.D. They are that the whole human race ought equally to enjoy the common gifts of nature and that for the rich to give to the poor was an act not of charity but of justice.

With the closer relations, however, between the Church and the Empire, we find an increasing neglect to criticize economic and social institutions in the light of the Gospel. Instead of seeking to establish an economic and social order which would give practical expression to the Christian belief that all men are equal before God and called to live as brothers in co-operative justice and love, the Church as a body accepted the conventional ideas underlying the existing economic order. Ideas about property really remained pagan, and, so far as embodied in law, Roman in spirit and presuppositions. This failure must be attributed largely to the fact that the earlier faith which was confidently determined to 'bring all things into subjection to Christ' was no longer the 'faith' of the leaders of Christian thought who sought self-sal

ration by ascetic retreat from the world. As the Latin doctrine about Original Sin strengthened pessimism about the possibility of achieving social justice, the order and emphasis of the petitions in the Lord's Prayer was largely ignored and the very idea of the petition 'Thy Kingdom come; Thy Will be done; in earth as it is in Heaven' was emptied of all its social fervour and dynamic. The communistic conception of the Law of Nature, vigorously insisted upon by the Early Fathers, was replaced by a Roman social outlook stressing law and order, rank and status and the class division of society. With Latin theology dominant not only during the mediaeval period, but over both Protestant Reformers and Catholic Counter-Reformers, the true Christian idea of property was allowed to pass largely into abeyance.

Individual theologians, admittedly, there were who were too great not to rise above the limitations of the restricted Latin outlook, particularly of course St. Thomas Aquinas; but even with St. Thomas, we notice a decline from the classical Christian conception. His views seem often to bear the imprint of Aristotle rather than the teaching of Christ and the Old Testament. He defines Justice as rendering to each man according to his dignity; and the emphasis we find has changed from the ideal of common property to a defence of private property. He still insists, however, that private rights cannot over-ride the rights of mankind to the necessaries of life. Temporal possessions are indeed private as regards ownership, but not as regards their use; as regards use, so far as they are superfluities, they belong to others who have need of them. In fact, he goes so far as to say that in case of need theft is morally justified.

Although the final abandonment of the Christian idea of property and the undermining of the Church's authority in the economic sphere cannot be attributed simply to the Reformation—R. H. Tawney has shown that 'differences of social theory did not coincide with differences of religious opinion'—nevertheless, orthodox Protestantism, and particularly Calvinism, must bear a heavy share of the responsibility. Calvin taught that 'though some seem to enrich themselves by vigilance, it is nevertheless God who blesses and cares for them.' And again, 'Why then does God permit some to be rich and others poor on earth, if not that he wants to give us an occasion to do good?' In the light of such teaching the idea of *stewardship* soon passed into the idea of philanthropy as a justification of private property, and with the emphasis on charity the claims of justice were forgotten and foundations for *bourgeois* hypocrisy were firmly laid.

As I said at the beginning of this paper, it is my conviction that in the interests equally of our economic and of our religious life there is urgent need to work towards a new synthesis of thought capable of commending itself to economists as well as to theologians. Throughout the whole Church must be published the banns of marriage between these two aspects of life, the economic and the religious, and it must be clearly shown that there is no cause or just impediment why these two should not be joined together in Holy Matrimony. Economists are mainly concerned, as all Christians surely ought to be, with the right use of material wealth, and we must recognize that their technical knowledge is quite indispensable to us if we are to take seriously the great task of making all our resources serve 'the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.' In the interests of reconciliation, we should perhaps first confess our own sins, admitting that hitherto in our preoccupation with rectitude in our personal behaviour, we have given far too little thought to the working out of the social expression of our Faith. In the light of that rich Christian tradition about which I have been speaking, it must surely be clear to each of us that God's demand is nothing less than that all aspects of our life must be claimed for Christ, shaped in accordance with His Will and transformed and renewed at all points by His Spirit. Single-mindedness in this aim is the *sine qua non* of Christian discipleship.

What then will be the dowry which the Christian will bring to this marriage? His greatest contribution to the thinking of those who shape our economic life must, I am sure, hinge on his unique understanding of the nature and destiny of man, and it is here that he can help economics at its weakest point. Although professional economists tend to be sensitive about this, their record in prediction from the time of Adam Smith onwards has not been a happy one, and perhaps the main reason for this is that they have attempted to build a science on a foundation of sand instead of rock—on economic man instead of on the biblical view of man in all its profundity and breadth of vision. In fairness, however, to some modern economists it must be said that they have abandoned the former assumption that the end of economic activities is fixed, namely happiness, and that man's sole choice is about the means to attain that end. They are now facing some of the difficulties involved in the problem of human preferences. The situation, therefore, is a more propitious one for advances on the part of theologians, since, whereas Marshall's system offered no obvious channel for co-operation, Mr. J. R. Hicks' *I Prefer*, by linking economic and ethical choice, throws out a bridge which theologians should welcome.

Again the abandonment of *laissez-faire* for a planned society will increasingly confront us with choices which call for the closest co-operation between economists and theologians. The kind of problem we are up against is whether it is better to spend one billion pounds of the National Income on the armed forces or on housing or to leave it in the consumer's pocket. In such decisions about State Services we are no longer in the world of the exchange market where the measuring rod of money gives us a ready answer. What is required is not the measurement of a sum, but a subtle balance of estimates between positives and negatives of both individual and social welfare, and having abandoned the measuring rod of pleasure, how is the economist to recognize which things are intrinsically good and which are the ends we should seek? Clearly he has to decide what kind of life and what kind of society is desirable. So then we see that the older approach to economics is not adequate to modern problems. Man's economic behaviour is no longer to be judged merely by the measuring rod of his personal satisfaction, but in relation to social obligations to others beside himself. The task of twentieth-century economics, in fact, is to give an economics of social enterprise, as the nineteenth century gave an economics of private enterprise, and the way towards it lies in following Professor Pigou in the development of Welfare Economics; but Welfare Economics without a view of society based on the Christian understanding of man's nature and destiny will be a house built on sand, as was classical economics for lack of this same foundation stone.

But what are the true ends of economic activity according to Christian thought? Christian social thinking starts from the conviction that God is creator, that 'the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.' In the words of St. Thomas, 'According to the natural order of the Divine Providence, material things are ordained for the supply of human necessaries.' There is therefore strong Christian justification for the economists' concern that our limited resources should be used as efficiently as possible to meet human needs. Such a concern is not to be dismissed as un-Christian materialism. Not only have we Christ's assurance that our Heavenly Father desires our material needs to be satisfied, but also the higher life and things of the Spirit are very much dependent on the enjoyment of a sufficiency of material wealth, and whereas it is comparatively easy to achieve a high level of culture for the *élite* if the masses are kept in a position of servility, such a level of culture is possible only on the basis of a high degree of economic productivity in a society which takes seriously the equality of all men in the sight of God.

Nevertheless, the Christian will insist that mere efficiency, like happiness or patriotism, is not enough. It must be efficiency in promoting the true ends of man as understood in the light of the Christian Faith. It must satisfy those legitimate needs of which modern man is most acutely conscious — the desire for status, for security, for self-respect and for some noble and satisfying purpose in life. Economic life to give its full satisfaction should be one of whole-hearted co-operation with God and with one's fellow men for the achievement of His purposes in the service of mankind. It should aim at promoting a vigorous sense of personal moral responsibility and giving the widest possible scope for individual initiative. And here lies the crux of what I wish to say. Christians must throw themselves whole-heartedly into the planning arena in order to save man's essential humanity from forces, growing ever more powerful, which threaten to engulf him. The choice before us is not whether to identify ourselves with the American or the Russian pattern of life. As Miss Barbara Ward has so well put it in the *C.N.L.*, No. 289:

> 'We in Europe . . . are being squeezed into impotence between two mass states which differ in vital respects but have an underlying resemblance. This resemblance is rooted in certain fundamental characteristics of the modern world which neither has escaped. They both suffer from giganticism. They both show unquestioning confidence in the scientist and the technocrat. They both accept a materialist conception of civilization. They both tend — one consciously, the other unconsciously — to exclude from life the personal, the spiritual and the mystical elements without which man's hold even on his essential humanity seems to grow feeble.'

The situation, however, Miss Ward suggests, is not without hope.

> 'This mass society has been produced by a series of historical decisions and can presumably be reversed. . . . This is not the first time that the Christian community has watched the ruin of a world grown old and cynical and over-centralized and materialistic. The world of the Caesars or the world of St. Augustine was riding as blind as ours. But none the less the Christian community was able to re-create that world by renewing its foundations.'

Are we Christians to-day, however, equal to the challenge of the times? Have we even begun to hammer out together with economists a realistic alternative capable of saving humanity from the abyss into which it seems to be irresistibly sinking? We are often loud in our outcry against the threat to individual liberty involved in modern planning, but even here are we not in danger of allying ourselves with those who use the word liberty as a catchword to obstruct social justice, and so still further alienating the masses who, while not repudiating Christian teaching, have lost faith in a Church which has shown itself so insensitive to their

plea for economic justice and security, a plea so heartfelt that to secure it they are willing to endure a considerable degree of regimentation.

The world can be saved from the spiritual evils of Communism and from the vast conglomeration of forces which to-day threaten human personality only by a realistic facing up to the full demands of the Christian Faith, searching as they are. The 'Uncomfortable Words' of Christ, not the comfortable words of philosophers and politicians, must determine our attitude to material wealth. As one great Christian has put it, 'It ought to be thought discreditable for a Christian to leave a large fortune at his death, for it means that he has disobeyed our Lord's injunction by laying up for himself treasure on earth and failed to do what he ought to have done for his neighbours.' Individual philanthrophy, however, is not enough. Christian social teaching demands not charity but justice. In the interests of both rich and poor, we must seek to minimize inequalities in wealth. No man has the moral right to more than he can use for the development of his character and the benefit of the community, but no man should have less. We must go back to the principles behind such ordinances as the Law of Jubilee, and find their most appropriate expression to-day. We must insist, as did the Church Fathers, that persons matter more than property and that private property rights must always be subordinate to the purposes of God. And we must consider whether Reinhold Niebuhr is not right when he says:

> 'In modern complex industry, private ownership is anachronistic and incongruous; and individual control of such centralized power is an invitation to injustice.'

Nevertheless it is not with giving right answers to these urgent problems that this paper is concerned, but rather with insisting that they are so urgent and crucial that the right answers must be found, and the right answers, I believe, will be found only through the closest co-operation between theologians and economists.

ORDINATION OF WOMEN

By Dr. Royden Shaw, C.H.

BEFORE embarking on the serious discussion of the vexed question of the ordination of women to the priesthood I wish to get rid of one obstacle in the way of such discussion, which I believe to be quite irrelevant but which is continually put forward.

It is the objection that to ordain women to the priesthood would increase the difficulties of the reunion of the Church of England with other branches of the Christian Church. I submit that this argument is based on the fallacy of believing that we can find a bond of unity in our various errors. To act on this curious belief is to attempt to tie the Churches together with ropes of sand. Let me quote the saying 'Since our disunion is in ourselves and all our unity is in Thee,' it follows that we shall never get rid of our disunity by any other means than an approach to God, to Christ who is the Truth and the Way.

I do not of course mean to suggest by this that those who oppose the ordination of women are mistaken. This would be obviously to beg the whole question. What I do submit is that since 'our disunion is in ourselves and all our unity is in Christ,' our sole consideration should be what Christ Himself taught on this subject. It is with this in view that I propose to enter on the discussion of my subject.

Yet even here there is of course the enormous difficulty of knowing what the teaching of Christ is in view of our own personal prepossessions — prepossessions from which perhaps even the wisest and most Christlike of us is not entirely free. These prepossessions, besides, are often so much a part of us that we are unaware that they exist and therefore are unable consciously to combat them. I realize of course that my prepossessions are some of them perhaps on the surface, and I am aware of them, and some far below the surface and I do not know that they are there. They may perhaps emerge in the course of our discussion. In the meantime let me describe the sort of thing that I mean.

It is surely clear, to take a single example, that the translators of the familiar words 'The Lord gave the word; great was the multitude of the preachers,' were unaware that they were twisting the meaning of the original which, as probably we all here know,

runs 'The Lord gave the word; the company of the women who proclaimed the tidings was a great host.' Again, I suppose that almost everyone took it for granted that the two disciples who met our Lord on the way to Emmaus were both men. Certainly it never occurred to me that they might be, as modern scholars have sometimes suggested, a man and his wife.

Let us take a lesson from a priest who was a modern saint, Father Andrew of the Society of the Divine Compassion. Many years ago, before I knew him personally, I was asked to address a meeting of clergy who would be, I was told, almost unanimously hostile to my claim. They certainly were. I remember to this day the feeling of icy though perfectly courteous hostility which struck me in the face as I rose to speak. At the end of my address there was discussion, and in the midst of it there rose from the very back of the hall the figure of a monk. Father Andrew, as I afterwards knew it to be, walked slowly up the gangway to the platform amid salvos of applause. When the audience were quiet Father Andrew told us that he had always taken it for granted that those on whom our Lord conferred what is called the Great Commission, *i.e.* the commission to the priesthood, were all men. He was now aware that modern scholarship proclaims that there were certainly women as well as men present in that upper room. Of this little company we are told that Jesus 'breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained.'

> 'When I reflect on the calm assumption which I have always made that this gift of the Holy Ghost was to a company of men only, and how I now realize that this was a wrong assumption, I am ashamed to think of my own prejudice. The least that I can do now is to reconsider my whole position in the light of this new knowledge.'

Father Andrew then descended the platform and returned to his place amid a silence as profound as the enthusiasm which had greeted his first appearance.

With this humbling recollection of our own limitations let us turn to the teaching of Jesus Christ.

The first thing that really startled me when I came to this study was the fact that there is no teaching at all from our Lord about the virtues, ideals or sphere of my sex. It is, I believe, literally true that if the context were unknown no one could tell of any saying of our Lord's whether it was addressed to men or women. I also believe that this is true of no other great religious teacher in the world. In all the great spiritual religions there is special teaching for women. It may be very exalted; it may be

debased; but it is there. To Jesus of Nazareth it belongs alone to have no special teaching for the two sexes. Nowhere do we find that men are to be strong and women gentle, men to be brave and women docile, men courageous and women chaste. We disregard this fact as we disregard so much of our Lord's teaching. St. Paul disregarded it at once. But it remains a fact. In the teaching of Christ there is only one standard and that is common to men and women. On one occasion our Lord was specially challenged on the virtue supposed to be most womanly, *i.e.* chastity. He replied by demanding the same standard in this difficult virtue for women and men. Whereupon 'they all went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last.' (As an example of my own prepossessions, I may add that it is only quite lately that it struck me with the force of a blow that if the woman was taken in adultery as we are told 'in the very act,' she cannot have been taken alone. Where then was the man?)

It appears to me to follow from this extraordinary feature of our Lord's teaching, *i.e.* that there is no specializing in virtue, for the sexes, that there is no specializing either in ideals or in spheres of work. It is certain that our Lord not only gave to women some of the greatest of all His teachings but enjoined them to become missionaries or prophets to the world of these teachings. I need only remind you of the woman of Samaria to whom our Lord said 'God is Spirit.' It was to women that the greatest messages ever given to mankind were delivered: 'That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' And to Mary Magdalene was given the message of the resurrection. There followed the injunction that she should be the proclaimer of these tidings to the rest of our Lord's disciples.

As an instance so perfect as to be—if you will forgive my saying so—comic is the comment of the learned compilers of a Report on the Ministry of Women, appointed by the two Archbishops after the National Mission of Repentance and Hope, who explain this, one would have supposed, significant fact, by saying that this appearance of our Lord to Mary Magdalene was not one of His official appearances. As no one who has not read the Report will ever believe me when I quote this passage I always carry the book about with me on these occasions, and here is the reference:

> 'The appearance to St. Mary Magdalene after the resurrection was not reckoned among the appearances which may be termed official, on which the belief of Christendom was to rest.' (Page 33 of the Report.)

The idea of our Lord making official and unofficial appearances filled me, I confess, with such irreverent glee that I think the

whole Report is almost worth labouring through for the sake of this single gem.

When we come to consider the possibility of women being ordained to the priesthood, it is difficult, in view of what our Lord's attitude towards women was, to suppose that our belief that women are sometimes given this vocation should be dismissed *a priori*. If our spiritual gifts are different why did our Lord ignore the difference? If they are the same, why may we not have the vocation to the priesthood? Because He only ordained men? What then becomes of the Great Commission given to an assembly of men and women? If we are reminded that there were only men at the institution of the Last Supper, why are women admitted to Holy Communion? It is likely that the twelve disciples were of the working-class: but our priesthood in the Church of England is not wholly confined to the working-classes. We know that the disciples were Jews: not all our priests are of the Hebrew race. All that women ask is that in their case also, the question of vocation, should not be pre-judged but that each individual case should be considered on its merits. Looking back on the history of the Church it is extraordinarily difficult to believe that none of those women saints whose names shine forth from its pages were fitted to exercise the vocation of the priesthood.

I wish to stress this question of vocation. It is sometimes urged that other vocations are open to those of us who believe that we should have been ordained priests. I have often been told myself that I have done 'better work outside.' It has been pointed out to me that I have been free to preach and, if I can, to prophesy. My attention has even been called to the fact that I can buy a fountain-pen and write without the permission of any bishop. All this is true but it is entirely irrelevant. The priesthood is a vocation. You would not tell a musician that he had better paint pictures, or a writer that he had much better be a public speaker. He would reply that public speaking or painting or whatever it is that he is advised to apply himself to are not his vocation. So is it with those of us who believe we have the vocation of the priesthood. Our belief may well be mistaken, and it is part of the advantage of a male candidate for ordination that he depends not only on his judgment of himself but on that of others who represent the Church. He believes he has the vocation: it is for others to test it. He believes he has the vocation: it is for the Church to which he belongs to give him authority to use it. He knows himself unworthy: it is for the Church to help his unworthiness with the grace of ordination. This is what we women ask for. We do not admit that we must be rejected because we are women. It is this

that seems to us utterly out of keeping with our Lord's teaching.

In my own practical experience I have felt this need and the hampering frustrations of the lay-woman who cannot be ordained. Both men and women have honoured me with their confidence and asked me for my advice. In my judgment they have sometimes needed the benefit of confession and absolution. I am not authorized to give it. I have sometimes advised them to go to a priest and make a sacramental confession. One of the most perfect parish priests I have ever known — a man who was above all and more than all other things a priest — has told me that some girl or woman whom I had sent to him had spoken in terms that he could not wholly understand and for which he did not like to ask for an explanation. 'If it had been a man,' he said, 'I should have asked him straight out exactly what he meant. In the case of a woman I did not like to ask because I did not understand her and was not sure whether I should be putting things into her head.' He added, 'I am quite aware that she did not get the help that she should have done from me.'

The difficulty of making women confess the sins of the flesh to male confessors has in some cases been so great that in Rescue Homes a girl has been allowed to make her confession to the Warden or Mother Superior, on whose word the priest has then given her absolution. It would hardly be possible to carry the mechanical view of Holy Orders to a more ridiculous extreme.

I have been a member of a little religious society which sometimes goes into retreat, and the retreats are generally though not always conducted by me. In the course of them we all greatly desire to receive Holy Communion. We must therefore scour the neighbourhood for a priest willing to come to us and give us Communion, and we are often aware that he naturally enough has no wish to come and is bored by our application. We have in fact no claim upon him. The claim of my fellow-retreatants is upon myself. Whatever the Church says, I am their priest.

I know of an Englishwoman, a deaconess, who was in charge of a little mission church in India and who was in the same difficulty. Every Sunday morning she had to find some priest who would come and give her congregation Holy Communion. She told me that the one who was nearest and least busy was most reluctant to come. She and not he was in fact their priest.

I do not doubt that the same priestly vocation was given by God to the Chinese woman Miss Lei Tim Oi, who was ordained by the Bishop of Hong Kong.

I cannot feel that the blank refusal of our claim — and it is being made by many women who have no wish themselves to be

ordained—can be reconciled with the teaching of our Lord. And I would urge finally that to accept the principle of spiritual equality between the sexes, a principle which is hardly anywhere now denied, and to disregard it in practice is a deep dishonesty. It is a more open, but not a less flagrant insult to women, that men should consider them, as in the past they have, to be spiritually inferior to men; and as long as they did so the denial to them of equal spiritual opportunity was perfectly honest. To-day it is, as I have said, dishonest. Many years ago the then Bishop of London, Dr. Winnington Ingram, forbade the Rector of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, to ask me to conduct the Three Hours' Service on Good Friday. When Mr. Shaw asked for a reason, pointing out that this service was a non-statutory one and that he was therefore entitled to ask me to conduct it, the Bishop replied that it was true that it was not a statutory service but, he added, 'it is a specially sacred one.' When a woman I know who had spent some years on embroidering a magnificent altar-cloth for her parish church took it to the vicar, he was obliged to seek in the street for some urchin who would help him to put it on the altar. When she offered to do this herself, he pointed out that it was impossible, because it meant her coming into the sanctuary, which was the holiest place in the church. When such priests or bishops assure us that they consider women spiritually equal with men, and yet take up such an attitude towards them, how is it not possible to feel that their attitude is dishonest to the core? And when, as in the first instance it happened, the Rector of St. Botolph's asked me to give my addresses in the schoolroom instead of the church, and the Bishop told him that this made it all right, are we to explain the distinction as one of function? Is it, in short, my function to deliver addresses in the schoolroom when it would not be my function to deliver exactly the same addresses in a church? What is the meaning of this distinction?

It is my claim to-day that the distinction is unjustifiable, unreasonable and un-Christian. It is my conviction that the Church does herself grievous injury when she presents to the world an organization and a practice which defies what she claims to believe, that is to say, the spiritual equality of women and men.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

By the Rev. G. L. H. Harvey, Editor of *The Church and the Twentieth Century.*

THE family is the unit or cell of the social organism. It is the nursery of the social virtues. Disintegration of the family involves the development of a cancer which spreads subtly and destructively throughout the whole body of society with malignant effect. The problems appertaining to marriage and divorce are matters of life and death.

Yet they are sometimes discussed with an intellectual levity which is nothing less than shocking. *The Matrimonial Causes Act* of 1937, commonly called the Herbert Act, lays a grave responsibility on the parochial clergy by giving them discretion to solemnize or to refuse to solemnize the marriage of any person whose former marriage has been dissolved and whose former husband or wife is still living. It is notorious that Convocation has passed a Resolution which purports, by forbidding the solemnization of any such marriage, to deprive the clergy of this direction. Although, by so doing, Convocation acted *ultra vires*, there are doubtless some clergy who will gladly welcome this pretext for evading the onerous moral and spiritual responsibility involved in making a decision in individual cases. It is so much easier to point to the Convocation Resolution and say, 'So, you see, I can't marry you. Go to the Register Office.' Where diocesan bishops, also acting *ultra vires*, seek to implement the Convocation Resolution, the tendency to shirk responsibility will be strengthened, as the clergy will feel that, lacking the guidance they might properly have expected from the bishop in difficult border-line cases, they are definitely in a weaker position. This is quite apart from any arbitrary pressure a bishop may improperly seek to bring to bear on a clergyman to persuade him to surrender his discretion. Of course, if a bishop honestly thinks that he has a canonical right to deprive his clergy of their discretion in the matter of marriage of the divorced and that in this respect a clergyman owes him obedience, his correct course is to cite the disobedient clergyman before the appropriate court. Neither Convocation nor the bishops jointly or severally have any right to tamper with the law.

Among the bishops who have sought to deprive the clergy of

he discretion conferred on them by the Act of 1937 is the Bishop of S. Albans. When his action was challenged in the correspondence columns of *The Times*, Sir Henry Slesser in the course of a letter defending his action stated that

> 'by statute all that is provided is that, while such marriages are generally permitted under the Act of 1857, by section 57 a minister may refuse to perform the marriage.'

The Act of 1857 is the Act which established the Divorce Court. It is simply not true that it gave the minister power to refuse to perform the marriage. Under that Act the minister was placed under a legal obligation to solemnize the marriage of a successful petitioner, and even in the case of the respondent he was obliged to lend his church for the marriage if a clergyman competent to solemnize marriages in the diocese was willing to officiate. It was not till eighty years later that the obligation was removed by the *Matrimonial Causes Act* of 1937. This period of eighty years cannot be conjured away. Yet when Sir Henry Slesser's error was pointed out, he blandly replied :

> 'It is true that in my last letter to you I cited the 1857 Act as amended by the Act of 1937, and not *in extenso,* in declaring that a priest need not marry a divorced person in his church.'

In fact he cited the Act of 1857. It did not matter in the least whether he did so *in extenso* or in an abridged form. He did not cite the later Act of 1937. The Act of 1857 did not do what he said it did.

I quote Sir Henry Slesser's crashing *faux pas* as an extreme illustration of the kind of inaccurate statement which is sometimes made by crusaders who are zealous to clamp on the Church of England, on laity and clergy alike, a rigorist interpretation of marriage.

It is worth while glancing at the reception by leading Churchmen of the Act of 1857, which, *pace* Sir Henry Slesser, compelled a clergyman to solemnize the marriage of the successful petitioner in a divorce suit. In the House of Lords, ten bishops voted for its second Reading, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and a future Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Tait, then Bishop of London. Only seven bishops voted against. Tait objected, however, to the use of the church service in the re-marriage of a guilty party. In the course of the debate he said that

> 'Although he and a vast number of the clergy maintained that marriage was not indissoluble by the law of Christ — that adultery was so heinous a crime that in itself it destroyed marriage — it was quite consistent for them to wish that they should not be obliged to use all the expressions in the marriage service in the re-marriage of persons divorced for adultery.'

In the upshot they were not obliged to do so. They were only obliged to lend their churches for such re-marriages.

Of a somewhat different order from the controversial acrobatics of Sir Henry Slesser, who, with the greatest of ease, can seem to annihilate a time-gap of eighty years, is a statement made in the *Report on the Canon Law of the Church of England* that the discretion allowed to a clergyman since 1937 in the matter of the re-marriage of divorced persons

> 'can only be an admission that the law of the Church, unlike the Civil Law, does not recognize a divorce with the right of re-marriage.'

This argument suggests skilful sleight-of-hand rather than brilliance on the flying trapeze. If the *Matrimonial Causes Act* of 1937 had admitted or intended to admit anything of the kind it would not have conferred discretion on the individual clergyman; it would have adopted a more general line. In fact the Preamble to the Act explicitly states that one of its purposes is 'the relief of conscience among the clergy.' It is notorious that, rightly or wrongly, some clergymen have conscientious objections to solemnizing the re-marriage of divorced persons, sometimes in general, sometimes in particular cases. The Act makes provision for their relief. Nothing beyond this is admitted or may even plausibly be inferred. Beyond this, it may be held, it is disingenuous to go.

It is very necessary that we should be on our guard against rash controversial statements and subtle ecclesiastical sophistries. We should also be on our guard against being entangled in a web of precedents and laws and authorities. Marriage is a rational and moral relationship between man and wife. It also has profound social implications. Problems concerning marriage and divorce are ethical problems first and last and all the time.

It is not now necessary to discuss all the complex critical questions raised by the various reports of our Lord's teaching about marriage. Leaving detail aside it stands out quite clearly. Probably none of the reports represents our Lord's *ipsissima verba*. *Matthew* represents Him as allowing divorce for fornication. *Mark* and *Luke* say that he forbade divorce absolutely. Most students think it more likely that *Matthew*, though doubtless for quite good reasons, added the exception than that *Mark* and *Luke* dropped it. But there is also a suspect element in *Mark's* version. This adds a reference to a wife who divorces her husband. In Palestine wives did not and could not divorce their husbands. It may be that *Mark* again for a quite good reason, thus modified the saying in order to make it applicable to the circumstances of readers among whom divorce of a husband by a wife was familiar. Archdeacon Charles believed that *Matthew* gives the more authentic form of our Lord's

pronouncement, while Dr. Streeter warned students that though ney might prefer the Marcan version, this did not imply a denial nat *Matthew* depends on a source which, on the whole, is superior o that which *Mark* used.

However this may be, it is essential that we should realize that, nough Jesus may at the moment have had Jewish marriage immediately in mind, what he had to say about marriage applies to marriage in general, no less to a marriage in a Register Office than to marriage in church, no less to a Gentile than to a Jewish marriage. It is as misleading to limit the applicability of his pronouncement as it would be to place limitations on his teaching bout unselfishness, generosity, and truthfulness. Moral principles are universal. Right is right, and wrong is wrong. It is rong for any man to be selfish or mean or a liar, whatever be his ace or creed. It is similarly right that every marriage, Jewish, Christian, or Pagan, should be a monogamous life-long union. dultery is always wrong; malicious desertion is always wrong. ut in the message of Jesus, ethics and religious faith are indissolubly united. He identified all that is true and good with the Will of our Father in Heaven. It is God's Will that man and wife e joined together as one flesh in a life-long union of mind and pirit and body. Let no man put them asunder.

But it by no means follows that, contrary to God's Will, man nd wife cannot be put asunder. They are sundered, and obviusly sundered, if one maliciously deserts the other. *Matthew* olds that they are sundered by marital infidelity which breaks the xclusive bond which constitutes the union.

> 'What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'

'To put asunder' is a direct, simple, and clear expression. It eans 'to part,' to part in fact. It has no subtle theological or etaphysical significance. As Bishop Hensley Henson said, in ie course of his evidence before the Royal Commission on Divorce nd Matrimonial Causes:

> 'The mediaeval doctrine of a *vinculum* which is independent of the union of the parties has no basis in Christian principle, and is deeply mischievous in many directions. It underlies the clerical agitation against the marriage of divorced persons, even of the innocent parties, and confuses the minds of those sections of the people which are affected by clerical agitations.'

or did Jesus envisage later civil or ecclesiastical procedure for btaining a divorce, whether absolute or from bed and board. It is wild anachronism to imagine that the principle he enunciated had ny reference to laws, civil or ecclesiastical, to differing traditions, hether Eastern or Western, ancient or modern, to tribunals or

Acts of Parliament, or pronouncements of Councils. If we rid our minds of such inappropriate associations, the person who, contrary to God's Will, puts man and wife asunder is the partner to the marriage who in fact breaks the bond of matrimony. Jesus was concerned with moral principles. He was no legalist discussing the ordinances of Canon Law or Statute Law.

As I have said, the person who puts asunder those whom God hath joined together is the partner who breaks the bond. Marriage is a physical, moral, and spiritual relationship between man and wife. Unhappily, but undeniably, it is possible to destroy this relationship. A very obvious example of such destruction is desertion. How dare anyone so misuse language as to say that when husband deserts wife or *vice versa*, the physical, moral and spiritual relationship between the two still maintains? Sometimes the bond is weakened, though not to the point of sundering, by the wrong conduct or self-regarding claims of husband or wife. Few married people, one hopes, would echo the question of S. John Chrysostom about marriage in general, 'What can be more bitter than this bondage?' Very many have found that with the passing of the years the bond which joins husband and wife has been gradually strengthened by the sharing of common joys, sorrows, and anxieties, and by a common love for the children of the marriage. Many childless marriages have been well-nigh ideal; but normally children, 'the heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord,' play an important part in the completion of marriage. Those who have read Flora Thompson's delightful trilogy of life in Oxfordshire during the 'eighties and 'nineties of the last century may remember the description of Laura's mother:

> 'Her mother, with five children to keep and care for, was hard-pressed, especially as she still insisted upon living up to her old standard of what she called "seemliness." . . . She was passionately fond of little children, the younger and more helpless the better, and would talk by the hour in baby language to the infant in the cradle or upon her lap, pouring out love and lavishing endearments upon it.'

It will be a bad day for marriage when the home is replaced for the young child by the nursery school. Obviously the nursery school has its function when young children lack the loving atmosphere of a true home; but it is at the highest only a second best. Marriage is also endangered by the economic necessity which is impelling women to leave the home for the factory. It may, under present conditions, be essential to persuade married women to go out to work, and it is not necessary to deny that between man and wife there exist in countless instances the strongest and most loyal of bonds even when the wife is away all day at the bench or the

boom; but it is certain that this situation imposes a strain on the matrimonial bond, and that, in some cases, it will not stand the strain. It was, of course, worse during the recent war. Few clergymen familiar with industrial districts will be ignorant of what happened to many a pretty, attractive young wife who, while her husband was away across the seas, went to the factory to work and there earned high wages. The children were left to the school and to the care, possibly very haphazard, of relations. She receives flattering attentions from a foreman or from her male work-mates. She has plenty of money, and so have they. She is dazzled by the flawdry glitter of public-house and dance-hall. It all ends in unfaithfulness to the marriage bond, sometimes of the grossest kind. An exceptional case, you say? Perhaps, in the sense that most wives, happily, were loyal to their husbands; but, at the same time, by no means rare. Some of us remember the return of the husband on leave, the efforts of ourselves and other well-wishers to heal the breach, the readiness of the husband to forgive, the apparent penitence of the wife—and then the same wretched story within a few weeks of the husband's return to duty. Many war marriages were entered on lightly and inadvisedly, without adequate knowledge, against an unstable hectic background. Of such marriages it seems almost irreverent to say that God had joined together the often unbalanced and impulsive husband and the vain, shallow, self-seeking wife. Unless sound moral qualities developed later, they were from the beginning doomed to shipwreck. The war has left behind much matrimonial wreckage. It is to be feared that for some time yet the Divorce Court will be working at high pressure. But divorce is the symptom of disease, not the disease itself. The aftermath of war in the form of an acute housing shortage will often put a great strain on the bond of matrimony, and again, in some cases the result will be disastrous.

The Divorce Court does not put asunder those whom God has joined together. It only gives social recognition to the fact that the bond has been broken. The breach has taken place before the Court begins to function. It was the breach itself which our Lord condemned, not the recognition of the breach. Nor is the Divorce Court a court of morals competent to weigh the moral responsibility of each party when a marriage has broken down. It may be that the 'innocent party' has contributed by positive faults or negative defects to the break-down. Few men are perfect husbands and few women perfect wives. Who can say? Certainly not the judge in the Divorce Court. No one can assess the respective responsibility of the two parties until the day dawns when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. But, when you gather

stones to stone the woman taken in adultery, it is a supererogatory judgment which leads you to reserve one or two to throw at her husband.

So important is the stability of marriage to the well-being of society that State and Church alike are rightly reluctant to acknowledge its break-down. The State is therefore very conservative in admitting grounds for divorce. This may sometimes work hardship to the individual. Cases are conceivable where one might have to say, 'Yes; I admit that your marriage has broken down. If we had only you to consider we should have to give formal recognition to the fact. But we have also to consider the general interests of society, and this over-riding consideration forbids divorce in your case. It is a hard case, we admit, but then hard cases make bad law.' That is one side of the question. But, while admitting its full weight, we should be scrupulous to bear in mind that there is another side which Dean Inge put clearly when he wrote :

> 'Hard cases make bad law; but it is a bad law which multiplies hard cases.'

The legislator, though giving full weight to considerations of morality, is bound to work with tools which, being for general use, are more or less crude. Jesus was no legalist. His appeal was to the religious and moral consciousness. Dean Inge, after discussing the relationship of his pronouncement on marriage to the views of the Jewish Rabbis Shannai and Hillel, sums up thus :

> 'My conclusion is that Christ meant to inculcate a higher view of the sacredness of marriage than had been held by the Rabbis of either school. I do not think that He meant to lay down hard and fast rules. If a very hard case had been brought before Him, He might possibly have said, as He said about another commandment, "Marriage was made for man, not man for marriage." He does not say that Moses was wrong in allowing for the hardness of the human heart. Moses was a legislator; He was not.'

The legalistic type of mind will find full scope for its activities in investigating the relationship between Canon Law and Statute Law as it affects a National Church, an important subject, but one which may be more appropriately discussed at this evening's session when the subject is *Canon Law in the Church of England*. Allied to legalism is traditionalism. No wise man will decry a judicious respect for tradition, acknowledging readily that tradition enshrines the thought and insight of our forefathers. But knowledge changes and conceptions change, and to accept tradition uncritically is less than judicious. On the question of marriage and divorce there is no uniform tradition, for it is notorious

that the practice of the Eastern Church varied from that of the West. Traditionalists in the Church of England appeal to the Western Tradition which, in reality, means an appeal to the practice of the Middle Ages. Questions relating to marriage are questions of personal and social ethics, and it is very questionable whether we should defer to the moral judgment of the mediaeval Church. It was a Church which exhibited moral blindness in a profoundly important respect. Far worse and more fundamental than the sexual irregularities of the more dissolute of the Popes and other ecclesiastics, high and low, was the blindness of the Church as a whole to the criminality of persecution and intolerance. So grossly defective was the general moral judgment of the mediaeval Church in this direction that the crimes of intolerance and persecution were exalted into virtues. When we think of the oceans of physical pain for which the Church was responsible in the days when it numbered among its weapons the stake, the thumbscrew, and the rack; when we think of the mental and moral agony it caused through the agency of spies and informers who constituted its ecclesiastical Gestapo, when we attempt to assess the spiritual injury inflicted by repression of thought and opinion, it gives us cause to hesitate before attaching an undue or uncritical value to its moral judgment in other directions.

The moral judgment is alive and active. It is something of an absurdity to defer to the moral judgment of the Mediaeval Church, while paying no regard to the churches which emerged from the Reformation. So at any rate thought Dr. Tait, one of the greatest and most representative of English divines. Speaking in the House of Lords on the Divorce Act of 1857:

> 'It was, he was prepared to maintain, the universal opinion of Protestant churches that in some grave cases marriage might be dissolved; and in these cases he thought it better that the dissolution should be pronounced by such a court as was proposed by this Bill than by private laws.'

Among the Protestant Churches are the Church of Scotland, which allows divorce for adultery and malicious desertion, and the Methodist Church. No one would deny to the Presbyterian Scot the possession of a high, perhaps austere, standard of moral judgment. No one who knows anything of the history of Methodism will doubt that much of its spiritual strength and vitality has been manifested in its power to raise even the debased to a higher moral standard of living. The Methodist Church is the daughter of the Church of England, a daughter who has far outstripped her mother in stature, for the Methodist Church, counting adherents and mem-

bers, now numbers over 42,000,000 spread throughout the world. No Methodist minister is obliged to solemnize the marriage of a divorced person if it is contrary to his conscience. In this respect he is in the same position as that of the Church of England clergyman since 1937. If application is made to him to solemnize such a marriage he must interview the prospective bride and bridegroom. If, after the interview, the minister feels any doubt as to whether the marriage should take place, he may refer the case to the ministers of the district, who, again, if they have difficulty in coming to a decision may refer the matter to a special committee. Here the minister has an advantage over the clergyman whose bishop is known to be opposed to the marriage of the divorced. The minister has access to the advice and judgment of his fellows. It is no use going to a bishop who, you know beforehand, will say no.

Many will feel that it is not a little absurd to attach grave importance to the tradition and moral judgment of the Mediaeval Church or to centuries-old Canons and to pay no regard to the principles and practice of contemporary living Churches which are conspicuous for their high moral standards.

REUNION AND RE-ESTABLISHMENT

By the Rev. T. J. Wood, M.A., Vicar of Charlbury, Oxon.

ON Saturday next, September 27th, 1947, the South India United Church will be inaugurated by the consecration of new bishops and the formal acceptance by all the bishops and presbyters of the Basis of Union. This event marks a new epoch in the movement towards unity, and any discussion of the question of reunion must take it as a starting point, for every aspect of that thorny subject has been set in a new light. The success which, after long and patient efforts and many disappointments, has crowned the South India Scheme will give hope and encouragement to those who look for similar movements elsewhere. Despite the opposition of so-called Catholics, and despite the obstacles of tradition and prejudice, a new era has opened.

The second reason why this event marks an epoch is that it indicates in clear terms the lines along which reunion is possible, and which every other movement towards unity must take. It proves also that those lines are acceptable to certain Churches, and if they can be commended to their members for prayerful

study and mutual discussion there is every hope that reunion at home (even though the difficulties and the prejudices are greater) may be advanced considerably in the near future. It will be remembered that the pamphlet *A Sketch of a United Church* had already suggested similar lines to those adopted in South India.

As Modern Churchmen we must carefully consider the Basis of Union to see whether it allows that degree of liberty which we believe to be essential to the Christian Church. The Lambeth Quadrilateral, which forms the basis of the South India Scheme, is capable of such a variety of interpretations that the meaning given to it in the Basis of Union must be examined carefully. Modernists can, we believe, be content with the interpretation there given.

1. *The Bible* is accepted 'as containing all things necessary to salvation and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith,' a phrase which leaves ample liberty for the interpretation of the Bible in accordance with modern knowledge. This is further implied by the acknowledgment 'that the Church must always be ready to correct and reform itself in accordance with the teaching of those Scriptures as the Holy Spirit *shall* reveal it.' (Italics ours.)

2. *The Creeds* accepted are the Apostles' and the Nicene, 'as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith,' and a footnote puts the manner of their interpretation beyond all doubt:

> 'The uniting Churches accept the fundamental truths embodied in the Creeds named above as providing a sufficient basis of union; but do not intend thereby to demand the assent of individuals to every word and phrase in them, or to exclude reasonable liberty of interpretation, or to assert that those Creeds are a complete expression of the Christian faith.'

Modern Churchmen can rejoice in this clear assertion of the principle of liberty of interpretation.

3. *The Sacraments* are described in simple language, far removed from the controversial temper usually associated with expositions of sacramental teaching, and modernists will not quarrel with the decision to reserve the celebration of the Holy Communion to ordained ministers, especially when this is done as a matter of custom and order, and not from any special theory of the nature of the ministry.

4. *The Ministry*. The Basis of Union combines those elements of Church Order which are characteristic of the uniting Churches, and ensures that ultimately the United Church shall be episcopal in form. Episcopacy, which clearly is the only possible basis for any scheme of reunion which hopes to include the Church of England, is accepted as 'historic,' and 'in a constitutional form' and is not 'committing the United Church to the acceptance of any

particular interpretation of episcopacy,' though individuals are, of course, free to hold what views they like on the subject.

Most modern churchmen will be amply satisfied with the generous measure of liberty allowed under this constitution, and the breadth and variety of the Church traditions embraced within the United Church will probably be able to maintain the liberty of thought and freedom of practice which are envisaged in the Basis and Constitution. We here pay our humble tribute to the faith and vision of those who have brought the ideal of a United Church so successfully into reality, and we wish the South India United Church Godspeed in its great spiritual adventure.

It is obvious that, with a few appropriate amendments, such a scheme might be adopted here in England. But the difficulties are much greater owing to the deeper traditions and prejudices among us, and to the problem which does not arise in India but is so interwoven with the English religious system, namely, the relationship between Church and State. Let us take these problems in turn.

In South India the religious divisions are not only denominational, they are largely geographical. That is to say, the Christians of one area belong mainly to one denomination, so that it is possible for them to enter the United Church as a whole body, and for the change to mean at the moment very little either in worship or Church Order. Difficulties will arise, now and again, but they will not be fundamental; they will probably be capable of local settlement. The situation is far different here at home, where denominational loyalties divide communities, villages, and even households, and where deep-rooted prejudices exist, not only through creed and habitual forms of worship, but through social environment and political partisanship. It may be less true than it was that the Church of England is the Conservative party at prayer, while the Liberals are associated with nonconformity, yet every parish priest knows that each place of worship in his parish represents a social organism, very largely independent and complete in itself, and that many social barriers must be broken down before unity can be achieved. Vested interests, whether in the form of buildings, funds, organization, or, above all, office holding, will have to be overcome. But the inevitable trend of events is, we believe, towards greater unity, and there are powerful forces driving the Churches together.

First of all, there is the weakening of the denominational fervour. The common man is not interested in those questions, whether theological or constitutional, which drove us into our separate camps. The absorbing interest of practical affairs to-day makes much theological discussion seem a childish splitting of

hairs. Scientific and economic questions now absorb the energy which was once directed towards religious controversy. Above all, the rising generation has not acquired the background of denominational prejudice, but lives in a different world from his fathers. The violence of the attack upon the Christian faith and standards by both Nazism and Communism has driven Christians together in self-defence. More and more we realize that we are living in one world, and that we need a united Church to meet it and convert it.

But even if those Churches which are uniting in South India could come together here in England, they would find themselves faced with a problem which would have to be solved, and which indeed must be solved sooner or later, and the sooner the better. That is the problem of the nature of the Church which is raised by the divergence between 'catholic' and 'protestant' conceptions. This problem lies at the very heart of all discussions on reunion. 'Catholics' have done their utmost to wreck the South India Scheme, and having failed, they have now carried the warfare into the missionary societies at home, in the hope of cutting off supplies from the United Church. When the issue of reunion is raised in a practical form here at home they will undoubtedly do their best to inhibit any scheme which does not accept their theory of the Church, and they will constantly use the threat of schism as a means of preventing progress. Sooner or later the Church of England must face the challenge of this vehement and aggressive section of the Church.

The danger does not arise from the kind of Anglo-Catholic who led the ritualistic movement in the '80s and '90s: they are a diminishing number and their influence is declining. The danger lies rather in that group of intellectuals who claim that the Catholic faith has passed through the fires of Biblical and historical criticism and has come out on the other side, purified and ennobled, but still the same, 'whole and undefiled,' divinely inspired, and divinely guaranteed.

Modern criticism has undermined much of the foundations upon which traditional Christianity was built. The assumptions of divine authority for Bible, Church, creeds and ministry, so essential to Catholicism, can no longer be held in the old sense. They rested upon the belief that there were certain given revelations, such as the words of Scripture, or the dogmas of the Church, which were of divine origin. They were therefore not subject to the same examination as secular knowledge. Directly, however, this claim is disputed and repudiated, and the foundations of Catholicism examined, it becomes clear that the distinction between truths of reason and those of revelation is impossible to

maintain. The foundations of the Christian faith are certain presumed historical facts, and certain doctrinal deductions which are made from those facts. Two things must therefore be established: (i) that the historical basis is true fact, or that at least sufficient is true to justify the deductions made therefrom; and (ii) that the doctrines based upon the facts are rational and legitimate. What cannot be tolerated is the view that the fathers of the Early Church were endowed with a supernatural power of arriving at dogmas in a manner independent of the historical facts and of their ordinary powers of reasoning, so that the Creeds and dogmas of the Church are exempt from criticism. The Catholic system must be examined at every point. The old-fashioned Catholic, of course, takes his religion for granted; he refuses to bring the modern critical apparatus to bear upon his faith. Anathema be he who says that 'the Pope can, and ought to, reconcile himself to, and agree with, progress, liberalism, and modern civilization.' (*Syllabus of Errors*, 1864.)

With Catholicism of this (Roman) kind no agreement is possible, and we should decisively repudiate those who argue that no step towards reunion should be made which would prevent ultimate reunion with Rome. The Roman Church, despite the sanctity which often shines in its members, is still that body which Hobbes described as 'The ghost of the Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.' Its system, and its methods, are still those of the Roman Empire, carried into the ecclesiastical sphere, and are more consistent with civil tyranny than with the spirit of Jesus. That is why the Roman Church is at home in dictatorships. Democratic ideals of liberty of thought, of expression, and of worship have no place where Rome holds sway. It is totalitarian in that it demands the whole man in all the departments of his life, and it is authoritarian in that it demands absolute obedience from its members. As such it is utterly unfitted to become the Church of democracy.

While, therefore, the Roman form of Catholicism can be ignored in all questions of reunion until such time as she reforms herself, there remains the enigma of the Liberal Catholic movement in the Church of England. Its members accept the methods of modern criticism and many of its results. It is of great importance for the cause of reunion to discover on what grounds they would wish to shackle any united church with Catholic doctrines whose historical basis has become so unsound. The answer may be taken from the pamphlet *Catholicity*, which is their deliberate contribution to the present discussion. Liberal Catholicism *starts with* the whole Catholic system, and takes the Catholic Church,

the Catholic Creeds, the Catholic Faith and the Catholic Sacraments as 'facts whose existence and authority Christians acknowledge.' Thus the whole of the results of Biblical and historical criticism are by-passed; the Biblical and theological studies of the last century are as though they had never been.

The ordinary student regards the facts of history and the opinions of theologians of the past as the materials out of which the Catholic system has been constructed, and he is concerned to test the historicity of the facts and to judge the trustworthiness of the opinions in order that he may assess the weight and authority which is to be attached to the various elements which make up the complex whole of Catholicism. For the truth of the final dogmatic structure must depend upon the historicity of the facts upon which it has been based and upon the rationality and legitimacy of the doctrinal deductions made by Christians in the past. All this method and its results are brushed aside by the new school. The casuistical poring over minutiae of history and philosophy cannot reach the truth. The truth is given in the 'wholeness' of the Catholic tradition. The Lambeth Quadrilateral is 'a symbol of the undivided wholeness of the primitive tradition that lies behind.' We get the impression that by some clever jugglery of words we have been landed in a world where reason and judgment have been left far behind, and where metaphor takes the place of clear thinking. For this 'wholeness' which is said to be characteristic of the visible Church and of its doctrines is a figment of the imagination. It is attained by the ignoring of all the conflicting elements and confusion of details. Those elements which it is desired to include under the heading of Catholicism are abstracted from reality, given a certain coherence round selected presuppositions, and then enfolded in a romantic aura of emotionalism. Thus it is hoped that all the advantages of a divinely guaranteed system of truth can be maintained and an emotionally satisfying religious environment ensured, while the rational and critical faculty is lulled to sleep by the suggestion that the difficulties of the problems raised by criticism are too great and that in any case their solution is not likely to get us anywhere; in the meantime, here is the Catholic Church! See how ancient and how glorious she is! Here you will find peace and security (which we all want in these days), so why not give up your perplexities and take her as she is? Stripped of its emotional covering this is really a demand for the return to authority, as the pamphlet admits (pp. 27-28). This is indeed to put the clock back. Liberals will never surrender the right and duty of the critical examination of any system of authority.

Under cover of this appeal to 'wholeness' one suspects the existence of the old assumptions which will not stand the test of critical examination. Take, for example, the crucial question for reunion, the authority of episcopacy. Everything turns upon this. Did Jesus ordain a particular form of ministry for His Church? Did the Apostles hand on a commission, by the laying on of hands, which cannot be obtained by anybody except through the Apostolic Succession? If so, then all non-episcopal orders are invalid; indeed they are infringements of God's divine will, and the only basis for unity is the acceptance by Free Churchmen of episcopal ordination. To which Catholics add the requirement that a united Church shall accept the *theory* as well as the practice of the Apostolic Succession. This view, we know, is not that of the Church of England; it is repudiated by liberals, evangelicals and Free Churchmen alike; it is repudiated in the Basis of Union in South India, and (*pace* the Bishop of Oxford and his fellow-contributors to *The Apostolic Ministry*) we do not believe that it can be sustained by modern scholarship. Further, we believe that the theory represents a view of the character of God which is utterly alien to the spirit of Christ, and it is contradicted by the experience of the centuries.

How is it treated in the pamphlet *Catholicity*? It is asserted without qualification, not as a matter of opinion but of fact, that 'The Apostles were commissioned by our Lord, and had authority to rule, to teach and to ordain in the new Israel—representing Him who is King, Shepherd and High-priest' (p. 3). Again (p. 55), that an Anglican should find 'that the celebrant at the Eucharist is a priest whom a Bishop, standing in the Apostolic Succession, has ordained,' is apparently regarded as a constant and unalterable part of our Catholic continuity. The Liberal Catholics must state clearly their answer to the primary question: Are they prepared to support a movement towards unity which accepts episcopacy as a fact, without any theories? They have no hope of converting the rest of the Church of England or the Free Churches to their point of view, and if they make their entry into the movement for unity dependent upon the acceptance of their particular theory, then the Church of England must face the question whether it is prepared to sacrifice all hope of reunion, or whether it will seek unity upon the lines of the South India Scheme. There is no doubt on which side the opinions of the mass of the laity of the Church of England would be thrown.

Let us now turn to the question of the Establishment. If the Lambeth Quadrilateral, as embodied in the South India Basis of Union, could be accepted by the Free Churches of this country,

most of the difficulties in the path of reunion would be removed. But there would still remain the tremendous barrier of the relation between Church and State. To begin with we would point out that the relation would be so modified in the situation which would arise consequent upon the formation of a United Church that many of the present arguments would become irrelevant. Indeed the question would be approached by both parties in an entirely new light. The psychological and social background of the question has undergone complete transformation in the last generation, and old prejudices and arguments are very largely irrelevant. The idea that a member of a State was necessarily a member of the religious organization adopted by the State has come down from primitive religion, when 'nonconformity' endangered the well-being of the community. The demand for uniformity has been one of the besetting sins of the Christian Church as it was of paganism. The heretic, the nonconformist, was not only a probable rebel against the State as well, but his very existence called in question the foundations of conventional religion and repudiated its claim to be the sole medium of divine authority; his elimination was therefore essential to both Church and State. This exaltation of uniformity and the requirement of orthodoxy are the weakness of Catholicism; by its very principles it is doomed to intolerance. This intolerant uniformity survived the Reformation. The principle of *cuius regio eius religio* was accepted by the Reformed Churches, and underlies the famous dictum of Richard Hooker.

In a vague way this view has survived in the right of every parishioner to the ministrations of the minister, in the habit of Church baptism, marriage and burial of people who never enter the church at any other time. But this view is in great danger of disappearing under the complexity of modern conditions. Its death warrant was really signed by the Toleration Act, for as Bishop Henson said, 'The Toleration Act registered the triumph of political wisdom, and the disappearance of an ecclesiastical ideal.' A nation which had fought a civil war for political freedom could hardly refuse to grant its members religious liberty, even though it did so reluctantly and only partially.

Indeed the limited nature of that toleration is largely responsible for the attitude which nonconformity has always taken towards the establishment. The denial to nonconformists of such natural rights as the admission to the universities (until revolutionary social ideas compelled the change) developed the sense of inferiority and injustice which still rankles in some. Now that another social revolution is in progress it might well appear to our

Free Church brethren that there can be no unity unless all association between Church and State is severed.

There are, however, other considerations to be borne in mind which would indicate a new relationship which would be free from the defects of the old. The present generation has seen the overthrow of many ancient institutions, and the repudiation by great nations of the Christian Church together with its ideals and moral standards. In the present chaos men and women of all nations are looking to England for hope and leadership, and nothing would do greater disservice to the cause of the Christian religion, and all that it implies of faith and hope, so much as the separation of Church and State. Whether it would be intended or not, the disestablishment of the Church of England at this juncture would be regarded throughout the world as the national repudiation of the Christian religion, and the consequences would be calamitous. Communism in Russia felt itself bound to deny all religion; perhaps the political associations of the Eastern Orthodox Church, together with its superstition, produced this violent reaction. Hitler denounced the Christian faith and all its moral standards. We believe that this country is moving towards a conception of national life which is truly based upon the Christian traditions inherent in our character and ideals. So far, therefore, from this being the moment when we should desire the State to dissociate itself from the Church, we urge that it is the appropriate time for considering how that relationship can be widened and deepened.

Liberals believe that the Church of England should be such as to be the inspiration of the national life. We will not throw away the ideal of Hooker without making at least one last effort to make it real. We believe that the Christian Church is wider than the present limits of the Church of England; that the Free Churches went out to emphasize truths which were neglected in the Church of England, and that in the conditions of those times their withdrawal was the only way in which the truths for which they stood could be defended and preserved. Now, we believe, is the time for the borders of the Church to be enlarged so that those who had to find their spiritual home outside her may be included within her enlarged borders. Were such reunion to be achieved the relations between Church and State would inevitably come up for revision, and we believe that a *modus operandi* could be worked out which would be acceptable to both parties. For such a Church would be even more truly the Church of England than the present organization called by that name, and we believe that the conscience of the country is still so far Christian that the State would desire some method by which its adherence to the Christian

aith and its ideals could be expressed. If the State were still of hat opinion it would be foolish and shortsighted for the Christian Church to refuse to accept the responsibilities and opportunities of stablishment for fear that its freedom might thereby be imperilled. Given goodwill and the Christian spirit on both sides, the task of working out a satisfactory relationship should not be difficult.

What are the freedoms that would be desired? Freedom to order public worship without constant reference to Parliament; freedom to exercise some measure of Church discipline; freedom to choose its own officers. Parliament would, we believe, be more ready to grant these freedoms to a Church constituted along the lines which we envisage than it is to modify the terms of the existing establishment, and we believe that the general feeling of the country would favour the granting of such freedoms to a Church more truly representative of the religious feeling of the people. It is well known that Parliament's refusal to pass the 1928 Prayer Book was due to its belief that the doctrinal basis of the Church was being altered; such a fear could not arise in the case of the United Church.

As regards Church discipline, no possible delegation of authority could take place which could deprive a citizen of his right to appeal to the King for justice. It is, unfortunately, common opinion that justice is more certain to be obtained in the civil courts than in the ecclesiastical. Each of the parties in the Church owes its continued existence to cases in which the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has reversed the judgments of ecclesiastical courts. Were any conflict to arise within the Church between the realist and idealist sections (on, for example, the marriage law) the practical issue would ultimately have to be settled in the civil courts, while the exercise of reasonable discipline would be supported by public opinion. Its abuses could always be checked by resort to the civil law. There would be far less likelihood of a comprehensive United Church falling into the hands of rigorist extremists than is the case in the Church of England to-day.

The third question is much more difficult. In theory the right of the Church to appoint her own ministers seems incontrovertible. The power of the monarch to appoint bishops and other dignitaries of the Church was a legacy from the mediaeval world. The anomaly was glossed over by the theory of the divine right of kings, but became more obvious when the right was exercised for the King by the Prime Minister. Even then the holder of that office might be held to represent the laity of the Church in the exercise of his power. But when the Prime Minister might be a nonconformist, or even an atheist, consciences were offended, and the

election by a Cathedral Chapter of an already nominated person became an 'intolerable farce.' Yet the whole system of patronage is interwoven with traditions in such a way that to discard it completely would be to lose much that is valuable. Any alternative has its drawbacks.

If congregations were given the right to appoint and dismiss their clergy the 'liberty of prophesying' might suffer serious injury, while to place the power of appointment exclusively in Diocesan Boards of Patronage fills us with horror. The elimination, too, of the patronage of universities and colleges would sever a link between them and the Church which is of vital importance. Here again we believe that with goodwill and good sense it should be possible to contrive a system of appointments which would ensure the maximum variety with efficiency. A possible solution for the appointment of bishops would be their election by an ecclesiastical body and their approval by a small Committee of the Privy Council or of the Houses of Parliament, the members of which, it might be laid down, should be members of the United Church of England.

The re-establishment of a United Church of England would draw into one all the glorious religious traditions of the nation, in their diversity and their richness. It would be a rededication of the nation to the task of realizing on earth the Kingdom of God. Such an act would, we believe, be a great inspiration to the world in these dark days, it would hold out the hope of a new era both for religion and for social endeavour, and would be a practical demonstration of our hope and faith that the kingdoms of this world may yet become the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ.

ENGLISH CANON LAW

By the Rev. H. D. A. Major, D.D., F.S.A., Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford.

THIS paper on Canon Law in the Church of England is due to the recent publication of the Report of the Archbishops' Commission entitled *The Canon Law of the Church of England* S.P.C.K.; 15/-).

The Greek word canon (*kanon*) means a measure or standard. The Christian Church used the term canon to describe its standards and decisions. Hence Canon Law is the Law of the Church in contrast to Civil Law, which is the Law of the State. Canonical obedience is the obedience given by a Churchman to Church authorities. Canon Law is as old as the Christian Church: it may be said to have come into existence with that body. It does not, however, go back to Jesus Christ Himself, unless we accept as historical the addition which St. Matthew's Gospel makes to the words in St. Mark's Gospel addressed by Jesus to Peter at Caesarea Philippi:

> 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.' (*Mt.* xvi. 18, 19.)

It is plain that when St. Paul 'resisted' St. Peter 'to the face' in Antioch 'because he stood condemned' (*Gal.* ii, 11, R.V.), St. Paul could have known nothing of the authority which at a later date was claimed for St. Peter by St. Matthew's Gospel in the passage cited. That passage embodies the claim which the great Church of Antioch made in its Gospel (St. Matthew's) for the supreme authority of its Apostolic Founder, St. Peter, long before there was a monarchical Bishop of Rome, who claimed to be the successor of St. Peter in that See.

The first Church Council to issue Canonical Decrees (*dogmata*) was that held in Jerusalem (*Acts* xv, 6, 22; xvi, 4) dealing with the question of the circumcision of pagan converts to Christianity and their obligation to keep the Jewish Law. This issuing of canons by Church Councils became customary, and the great Council of Nicaea issued twenty canons the best of which is, in the Greek, four words long: 'Let the ancient customs prevail.'

But between the Council of Jerusalem held before 50 A.D. and the Council of Nicaea, 325 A.D., there came into existence a num-

ber of documents known as Church Orders. These Church Orders have been thus defined by Professor Easton in the Introduction to his *Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* :[1]

> 'The early Church Orders were systematic manuals of disciplinary and liturgical rules for which the collective authority of the whole apostolate was claimed. They made their appearance in the second century, grew to considerable dimensions in the third, and reached their fullest development toward the end of the fourth century. They are sources of importance for our knowledge of the inner life of the church, and they were influential factors in the formation of the later canon law.' (p. 1.)

It is now generally agreed by scholars that our New Testament *Epistle to Titus* embodies a primitive Church Order of the Church of Crete, and that the two *Epistles to Timothy* embody a primitive Church Order of the Church of Ephesus combined with some fragments of Pauline letters.

As Church Councils multiplied so Church Canons increased in number, and these canons were further supplemented by the publication of numerous Papal Decretals, some genuine, some forged. A collection of these canons having authority in the Papal Church is entitled *Corpus Juris Canonici*. When the authority of the Canon Law is cited by many Anglo-Catholics their reference is to this Papal *Corpus*.[2]

This Papal *Corpus* so far as the Church of England is concerned with it, received its death-blow at the Reformation by the hand of Henry VIII. The *Act for the Submission of the Clergy* passed in 1534 deposed the Papal Canon Law from its pride of place by declaring it null and void wherever it is contrary to the Royal Prerogative and the Statute Law and the Common Law of the realm. The same Act also prohibited ecclesiastical bodies from enacting new Canons without having first received permission to do so from the Crown. As a consequence the Church Law henceforth administered was derived from the following sources :

(1) Parliamentary statutes such as the Acts of Uniformity which included the Prayer Book, Ordinal and XXXIX Articles.

(2) The Ecclesiastical Common Law resting on immemorial usage which included what remained of the old Canon Law in its now subject state.

(3) The relevant parts of the *Corpus Juris Civilis*.

> 'The interpretation of the Ecclesiastical Law, a coherent system formed from these divers elements, lay with the body of lawyers, first established in 1511, whose corporation was known as Doctors' Commons' (p. xii.)

[1] Published by the Cambridge University Press, 1934.

[2] An admirably succint and lucid account of the stages of development of Canon Law in the Western Church is given in *The Canon Law of the Church of England* (ch. 3).

This corporation was abolished in 1857 when its functions were taken over by the King's Courts.

An important step in our post-Reformation English Canon Law was achieved by the enactment of James I's Canons of 1603. This body of 141 Canons (which included much previous ecclesiastical legislation pre-Reformation and post-Reformation) was passed by the Convocation of Canterbury in June 1604, confirmed by royal letters patent September 1604, and passed by the Convocation of York 1605-6.

It is these Canons of 1603 with which the Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Canon Law in the Church of England is practically and crucially concerned, for the main purpose of the Archbishops' Commission is to make practical proposals for providing, if possible, the Church of England with a new set of Canons. These proposed new Canons are in no sense 'profane novelties,' if we may here use the phrase of St. Vincent of Lerins, but avowedly aim at the bringing up to date the Canons of 1603 by means of emendation, addition and re-arrangement.

These Canons of James I, it should be noted, were not passed by Parliament and are not binding upon the laity generally, but only upon the clergy and such laymen as are church officials, *e.g.* churchwardens, parish clerks, diocesan registrars, etc. To-day these Canons of 1603 are for the most part hopelessly out of date and are quite unknown by the bulk of the English clergy, and in a number of cases of course are neglected and disobeyed. They are usually bound up in a single volume with the *Homilies* as little read as are the Canons. It may be claimed that for every ten thousand times Crockford is consulted by the clergy the Canons are not consulted once.

There is no need to recite any of these 141 Canons of 1603 here and now. They aroused much apprehension in the minds of Puritan Churchman at the time when they were enacted and were a factor in creating the Laudian policy of '*Thorough*' which produced the counter-policy known as '*Root and Branch*' culminating in the Civil War. It is the 134 Revised Canons proposed for enactment by the authors of *Canon Law in the Church of England* with which we are concerned in the rest of this paper.

These Canons deal with the following subjects: *The Church of England*, Canons 1 to 11; *Divine Service and Administration of the Sacraments*, Canons 12 to 51; *Ministers, their Ordination, Function and Charge*, Canons 52 to 83; *The Order of Deaconesses*, Canons 84 to 86; *The Lay Officers of the Church of England*, Canons 87 to 95; *Things appertaining to Churches*, Canons 96 to 111; *The Ecclesiastical Courts*, Canons 112 to 125; *The Synods*,

Assemblies and Conferences of the Church of England, Canons 126 to 134.

These Canons are excellent in their arrangement, succinct in their contents, lucid in their definitions, modern in their phraseology and free from technicalities. They are a great advance upon the Canons of 1603. Their ostensible aim, as we have already noted, is to bring the Canon Law of the Church of England up to date. In this they have succeeded. It must not be supposed, however, that this is their sole purpose. There is obviously something much more dear to the hearts of the Commission which composed them, and that is to secure, by the enactment of these Revised Canons, a number of reforms in the character and constitution of the Church of England. It is on this aspect of the project that we need to concentrate attention. The general tendency of the reforms embodied in these Revised Canons is, as might be expected, Anglo-Catholic in its ideals and methods.

For instance, Canon 65, *Of Priests hearing Confessions*, and Canon 66, *Of the Duty of Priests towards any who resort to them to confess any Secret or Hidden Sin*, may be regarded as intended to assist auricular confession to regain a position in the practice of English churchmen, of which it was deprived at the Reformation. These two Canons are obviously intended to justify the novel exhibiting of notices in our cathedrals and parish churches stating that auricular confessions are heard in these places.

Another example of the Anglo-Catholic tendency of these Revised Canons is observable in their endeavour to 'tighten up' Church discipline. Thus Canon 31, dealing with Baptism, prescribes that 'no person shall be admitted to answer as godparent who is unbaptized, or who is openly known to live in sin notorious without repentance, or who has maliciously or openly contended with his neighbours without being reconciled.' The same Canon also prescribes that at least one sponsor of the same sex as the baptized shall have been confirmed. In Canon 32, concerning the Baptism of Adults, it is directed that the Minister shall give a week's notice to the Bishop of the Diocese. In Canon 37 it is enacted that no minister shall allow the marriage of two unbaptized persons in his church, and if two persons, one of whom has not been baptized, desire to be married, the minister shall refer the matter to the Bishop of the Diocese and obey therein his order and direction.

In the interests of the influence of the Christian religion on our nation this inquisitorial and disciplinary attitude is to be deprecated. Such methods will seem to many to be opposed to that spirit of Christian love which thinketh no evil, and so to pre-

sent our national Church in a repellant rather than in a welcoming aspect.

It is difficult to see what really good result will be secured by prohibiting members of the Society of Friends and members of the Salvation Army from being married in the Church of England or by debarring them from acting as sponsors at a Christian Baptism when it should be remembered that those baptized are being admitted, not into the Church of England, but into the Church of Christ. Some will not unreasonably ask: Why should a busy diocesan bishop be troubled with these details of parochial administration which properly come within the sphere of the parish priest? The reason is, we believe, that there is a marked tendency towards Prelacy in the Revised Canons, and the diocesan bishop is given by them more lawful authority than he possesses at present. As an example of this we may cite Canon 128, *Of Diocesan Synods*:

> 1. 'A Bishop may assemble all Priests who are beneficed or licensed to serve within his Diocese, together with all Deacons so licensed in attendance, to join with him in a Diocesan Synod.
>
> 2. 'A Bishop in his Diocesan Synod may publish new Canons enacted in the Provincial Synod; he may cause his clergy to confer with him in matters affecting faith and morals and the better ordering and discipline of the Diocese; and he may publish, after such conference duly held, rules or regulations of his own making: Provided that they be not contrary to the Constitutions and Canons of the Church of England, to the Statute Law of the Realm, or to the Royal Prerogative.' (p. 211.)

A *caveat* is necessary: these Diocesan Synods must not be identified with Diocesan Conferences, with which we are all familiar and are dealt with in Canon 133. These Diocesan Synods include no lay representatives. The granting to the diocesan bishop the right to 'publish rules and regulations of his own making,' even though it be after consultation with his clerical Synod, will seem to many Churchmen to be a practice open to serious objection as the potential parent of conflicting legislation, legal strife and distressing confusion. Such dangers are by no means imaginary where we have, as in the Church of England, a situation which has been described as 'three religions under one roof,' and where each of these three schools in the English Church can claim adherents from among our diocesan episcopate.

Another Anglo-Catholic tendency in the Revised Canons is the approximating of our English Canon Law to the Roman Canon Law. This is most clearly seen in the Revised Canons treating of divorce. These Canons refuse to recognize the lawfulness of divorce under any circumstances, and as a consequence refuse to permit the second marriage of a divorced person while the partner

of the first marriage is living. Of course such a decision ignores the exception twice repeated in St. Matthew's Gospel (v, 32; xix, 9), which permits divorce in the case of sexual infidelity (*porneia*) and consequently without loss of Christian status permits the re-marriage of the 'innocent party.' This is also the law of the Greek Orthodox Churches. In the Roman Church no divorce is permitted, but recourse can be had to nullification, which for all practical purposes is the equivalent of divorce, and permits those who have been married, and have even had children by their marriage, to secure the quashing of their marriage by an ecclesiastical court with consequent freedom to marry again whilst their former partner is alive. The scandals caused by these Roman nullifications of marriage are notorious, but our Revised Canons propose to establish in the Church of England episcopal courts which will undertake in a case of persons divorced in our civil courts, should such divorced persons appeal to them, to decide whether their marriage may not be nullified ecclesiastically. In the event of such ecclesiastical nullification being obtained, both parties would be free without ecclesiastical censure to marry again while the partner from whom they have been civilly divorced is still living.

With the example of the Roman Church before our eyes we ought to hesitate to establish a system of ecclesiastical nullification of marriages in the Church of England.

We turn now to another feature of the Revised Canons. By Canon 112 there is substituted for the right of appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in causes ecclesiastical a new Court of Appeal, the constitution of which is as follows :

> 'There shall be an appeal from a Provincial Court to a Final Court consisting of the Archbishop of the Province and four other members; of whom two shall be members of the Upper House of Convocation (*i.e.* Bishops) . . . and two shall be communicant members of the Church of England who hold, or have held, high judicial office, nominated from time to time by the Lord Chancellor.'

This new Court of Appeal of which the majority are bishops will seem to many Churchmen who have studied the methods and decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in causes ecclesiastical to be a very frail and dangerous substitute for it. As all students of the subject know, the historic decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council have been instrumental in periods of ecclesiastical conflict, intolerance and party feeling in maintaining the comprehensiveness, internal freedom and the spirit of enlightened progress within the Church of England. It is these decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council

which have retained for Liberal Churchmen, Evangelical Churchmen and Anglo-Catholic Churchmen their rightful and honourable place within our national Church.[3] That Court with its great legal experience, its exaltation above the arena of ecclesiastical strife, its understanding of the more profound aspects of the points at issue involved in the appeals which have come before it, has deserved too well of Church and nation to have substituted for it the Court of Appeal, ingenious as it is, proposed in Canon 112.

We turn now to another feature of the Revised Canons. The Revised Canons, while avowing and supporting the supremacy of our Sovereign over the Church of England, as has been acknowledged by the Church ever since it threw off Papal supremacy in Tudor times, seems tacitly to ignore the authority of Parliament in the sphere of Church legislation.

There are three Canons which must no doubt be read in conjunction if we are to arrive at a just decision. These are Canon 10, *Of the Royal Supremacy*, Canon 126, *Of National and Provincial Synods*, and Canon 134, *Of the National Assembly of the Church of England*. The pertinent clauses run as follows:

Canon 10, *Of the Royal Sopremacy*.

> 'We acknowledge that the King's Most Excellent Majesty, acting according to the laws of the realm, is the highest power under God in this kingdom, and has supreme authority over all persons in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as civil.' (p. 109.)

Canon 126, *Of National and Provincial Synods*.

> 1. 'The Sacred Synods of England, in the name of Christ and under the King's authority assembled, are the true Church of England by Representation, and have power to make Canons, Constitutions, and Ordinances, to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and have also authority in controversies of Faith.'
>
> 3. 'No Canon, Constitution, or Ordinance is enacted, nor anything done with and by the authority of Convocation, except it have the concurrence of the Lower House of Clergy with the Upper House of Bishops and have also the assent of the Archbishop.'
>
> 4. 'Nothing is the Act of a National Synod which has not been agreed upon by both houses of Bishops and both houses of Clergy severally, and has not the assent of both Archbishops.' (p. 205 f.)

Canon 134, *Of the National Assembly of the Church of England*.

> 1. 'There shall be a National Assembly of the Church of England, commonly known as the Church Assembly, to deliberate on all matters concerning the Church of England and to make provision in respect thereof.'
>
> 2. 'The Assembly shall consist of three Houses: the House of Bishops, the House of Clergy, and the House of Laity . . .'

[3] Broderick and Fremantle, *Ecclesiastical Judgments of the Privy Council* (Murray, 1865), is the best summary we possess of these cases.

4. 'It is not within the competence of the National Assembly to issue any statement purporting to define the doctrine of the Church of England on any question of theology.' (p.213 f.)

No doubt the clause in Canon 10 'according to the laws of the realm' includes the authority of Parliament, in accordance with whose decisions the Sovereign is constitutionally bound to act, and as this is recognized by all to-day, though it was not so recognized in 1603, there was perhaps no need to refer to Parliamentary authority in this Canon. When, however, in Canon 126, which deals with the authority of Canons, Constitutions and Ordinances enacted by national ecclesiastical bodies, we should have expected it to have been clearly stated that these new Canons, Constitutions and Ordinances possess no legal authority unless they have also received the assent of Parliament. This also applies to all provisions projected by the National Assembly of the Church of England to which reference is made in Canon 134. Of course Parliament since the Church Powers Act of 1919 has practically restricted its functions in the sphere of ecclesiastical legislation to criticism and rejection of such Church Assembly measures as it deems to be undesirable and detrimental. On the other hand, it refrains from initiating and enacting measures dealing with ecclesiastical matters and then compelling the Church to accept them. This is one of those recent and reasonable compromises in the sphere of Parliamentary authority over the Church which ought to satisfy Churchmen of all parties, Liberal, Evangelical and Catholic, and we venture to think that reference to it ought to have been included in the Revised Canons. Parliament may be relied upon to reflect more truly the lay judgement of the nation in matters of ecclesiastical controversy than does the House of Laymen in the Church Assembly, and this important function of Parliament ought neither to be ignored nor resented by the Church.

We are compelled, however, to add that in view of the Anglo-Catholic tenor of the Revised Canons we suspect that this omission of reference to Parliamentary authority is deliberate and is intended to pave the way for Disestablishment. No Church policy could be more disastrous to the influence of the Christian religion among British people, and it would certainly culminate in the disendowment, disruption and dissolution of the Church of England in this land and the final incorporation of its Anglo-Catholic remnant into the Roman Church.

In concluding this summary treatment of the proposed Revised Canons we ought, on the one hand, to admit that in view of the present official ascendancy of Anglo-Catholicism in the Church of England the proposed new Canons are as judicious as could have

been expected; but, on the other hand, we are compelled to state our conviction that the vast majority of English Church people—the silent majority—if they really knew anything about these Canons or felt any interest in them, would be strongly opposed to their authorization.

In view therefore of our present Church situation we are justified in asking whether there is any need to supplement our Church legislation by legalizing these Canons. Is there any real need for them? Legalizing them will not give our Church either the unity or the energy or the guidance and the inspiration which it needs in our present religious crisis. It is only the development, particularly in our clergy, of the spirit of love, truth, freedom which are the very essentials of the Christian religion that can save the situation both for Church and State. We cannot forget the danger of legalism for which Jesus Christ died to deliver the religion of His day. We cannot forget St. Paul's heartfelt warning, 'With freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage' (*Gal.* v, 1), nor his declaration that 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

We cannot ignore St. Augustine's statement cited by our English Reformers that in his day, owing to the growth of legalism within the Church, the state of Christian men was worse than that of the Jews. Of course we must have order in the Church of England, but we need to stand firmly against the multiplication of regulations. Jesus Christ deprived the traditions of the Fathers of all authority and reduced the five books of the Mosaic Law to two Commandments. If our Church's rulers could accomplish a similar feat how great would be the gain to the Christian religion. The Christian religion is a religion of principles not precepts, a religion of the Spirit not the letter.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

By the Rev. W. G. Fallows, M.A., R.D., Vicar of Preston.

JOHN KNOX in one of his interviews with Mary Queen of Scots recorded in his *History of the Reformation in Scotland* ventured to criticize the nobility and the Queen. 'What are you within this Commonwealth?' asks the Queen, to which the Reformer replied :

> 'A subject born within the same Madam. And albeit I be neither Earl, Lord, nor Baron within it, yet hath God made me—how abject soever I be in your eyes—a profitable member within the same. Yea, Madam, to me it appertains no less to forewarn of such things as may hurt it, if I foresee them than it doth to any of the Nobility; for both my vocation and my conscience crave plainness of me.'

A parish priest and one of the lesser clergy finds himself in a similar position when he is invited to speak of Problems of Church Administration. He, too, may claim to speak by the right of 'a subject born within the same'; upon him is laid the obligation to 'forewarn of such things as may hurt it'; for him, too, his vocation and conscience crave plainness.

Churchmen of Jane Austen's or of Anthony Trollope's time would find the agenda paper of a present-day Diocesan Conference, or the title page of the average parish magazine strange and startling documents. The fatuous Mr. Collings or the saintly Mr. Harding would not recognize the Church of England reflected in these documents as an institution to which, but a century ago, they had belonged. Their bewilderment would be a measure of the revolution which has taken place in the Administration, organization and government of the Established Church.

The Church of England did not escape the wave of reform which followed the passing of the Reform Act in 1832. Since those days there has been a steady and continuous reform and gradual adjustment of its Administration. In 1835 Peel appointed the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Commission whose main recommendations were enacted by legislation in the next few years. The Commission of Inquiry was itself converted into the Ecclesiastical Commission. At its inception this body was denounced because it comprised a majority of laymen. Bagot considered it

'a power as irresponsible as it was gigantic — an *imperium in imperio* which before long must supercede all authority in the Church.' Another writer pronounced it 'an inquisitorial tribunal of the most vexatious kind.' The Bill by which the Commissioners were established was received by the Lords late in the Session and was opposed by all the English Bishops, not members of the Commision of Inquiry, who had not left London. It is as well to recall the initial opposition and fury excited by the formation of the Ecclesiastical Commission which has since done so much for the creation of new parishes, the improvement of underpaid benefices and the erection of parsonage houses. The Estates Committee, a small body of three laymen established in 1850, has by its wise administration of the Church's resources effected a silent and beneficial revolution in the administration of the Church. Side by side with the gradual extension and adjustment of the Church's resources there has also been a steady and continuous development in the administrative work of the clergy. Bishop Wilberforce is both praised and blamed as the creator of a new conception of episcopal duty. 'What Bishops do to-day,' said Randall Davidson, 'is largely due to his example.' It was his care to supervise his diocese, to be the mainspring of its spiritual and religious life, to be the centre of all its affairs. His example has not been wholly salutary. Administrative zeal and efficiency tend to extinguish other necessary qualities, and Archbishop Benson may prove to have been not very wide of the mark when he said, 'Wilberforce will be the execration of the Church of the future.' If the episcopal office has been transformed in the last hundred years there has been a corresponding change in the pastoral and ministerial office of the parochial clergy. They conduct more services, supervise more organizations, are fewer in number but not less hard-working and industrious than their Victorian predecessors. Vocation and conscience crave plainness of speaking, but they do not preclude appreciation and gratitude that one's lot is cast in a period when the administrative zeal and industry of the Church stands so high — perhaps never higher. The faithfulness of her servants, their high sense of duty and the unremitting energy with which they apply themselves to their work is a matter for thankfulness and praise.

When full recognition has been made of the benefits which have accrued to the Church, note must be taken of the dangers and weakness inherent in the present situation and trend. The scope of this paper is intentionally limited. Archdeacon Townley will deal with some of the practical difficulties of Church finance and parochial organization. The two main submissions of this

paper are (1) that Church administration, following the prevailing fashion, is becoming over-centralized, uniform and bureaucratic and (2) that it is slowly but surely transforming the character of the Church of England from being the focus of the religious life of the nation to becoming an exclusive denomination.

I

Centralization, Uniformity and Bureaucracy are the watch-words of modern organization. They are unpopular words deprecated even by those who promote them and they are easier to decry than to avoid. It is part of the dilemma in which our closely-knit and intricately organized modern society finds itself. The State's interest in and control of new and ever expanding fields of social activity and human welfare necessitate an enlarging of the machinery of government. This may be inevitable to achieve a more equitable and better planned society though there may well come a time when the loss outweighs the gain. One clear indication of this silent transformation of English society is the manner in which Whitehall is gradually ousting local government authorities as the real centre of administration. Local Government is gradually being reduced to a rubber-stamp status for the detailed application of a policy created, planned and directed from above. The infinite variety and diversity which characterized the older system is giving place to a more uniform pattern. It cannot be denied that there are great potential benefits inherent in this change, and it is our hope and belief that the body politic will find its own characteristically English solution to this dilemma. Meanwhile there is a similar development taking place in the Administration of the Church of England. Increasingly its life is being controlled on a National, Provincial and Diocesan basis. Rules and regulations are made from above—with the very best intentions—and imposed on the parishes as a uniform pattern. Local parochial responsibility and the independence and status of the pastoral office are being openly assailed. The recent Diocesan Education Committee's Measure which prevents a body of parochial school managers determining the future of the parish school without the approval of the Diocesan Education Committee is a clear instance of this tendency. The attempt of the Houses of Convocation to abolish the independence and pastoral responsibility of the parochial clergy in the administration of the Marriage Law of the Church of England is a further straw which indicates the direction of the prevailing wind. Furthermore, there is a constant succession of national and diocesan appeals for larger and larger sums of money which an overburdened and harassed vicar is expected

lay before an impecunious parochial church council, and he id they are regarded as ruffians, rascals and traitors, lacking in corporate sense of the Church, if they do not mutely and obedi- ntly respond.

One of the most serious consequences of this development in e machinery and organization of the Church is the tremendous rden which it imposes on the bishops as the chief officers of the hurch. Fifty years ago Bishop Creighton complained in his residential address to the London Diocesan Conference:

> 'Since I have been Bishop of London, I have been conscious of increasing mental deterioration. I have had no time to read a book; I have really not had time to think.'

he half-century that has passed since one of our most learned shops spoke these words has seen a steady enlargement of the shops' administrative sphere. The Archbishop of York in his cent book, *The Claims of the Church of England*, makes the me complaint. 'The pressure of a modern bishop's life,' he ys, 'does not give him much time either for deep thought or for riting.' It is difficult to over-estimate the loss to the life and fluence of the Church which the pressure and strain of episcopal dministration entails, leaving as it does all too little time for those isurely pursuits of learning which have added, in the past, so uch lustre to the prestige of the English Church. The danger oes not go unrecognized even in high places. The Archbishop f York writes:

> 'While the medieval bishop was absent from his diocese through the claims of the court, and the eighteenth century bishop through the time he had to give to the House of Lords, the modern Bishop is frequently called away by the demands of administration which is fast becoming over-centralized.'

During the present century the episcopate has increased not nly in numbers but also in power. The editor of *Crockford* has, n more than one occasion, attacked episcopal pretensions.

> 'We have noticed,' he says in the preface to the 1939 edition, 'a tendency to magnify the episcopal office in new and unfamiliar ways. Conspicuous amongst these is the bold assertion that the parochial clergy are no more than the delegates of the Bishop. We should not have thought this worth mentioning had not the following statement happened to meet our eyes: "The Bishop is the centre of unity and the diocese is his charge, and that charge is divided up for practical pastoral purposes into parishes in which a vicar shepherds a portion vicariously for the bishop".'

This statement which appeared in a diocesan publication over the ignature of a bishop is dangerous not because of the ignorance it betrays of the historic meaning of the words rector and vicar but

rather because of the conception of the relation of bishop and parochial clergy which it implies. The most effective antidote to this pretentiousness and the best corrective to the excess of the bishops' administrative powers is a right sense of proportion in the conception of the bishops' jurisdiction.

> 'In early times,' said Creighton, 'great difficulties beset the Church of England because the bishops were regarded as policemen. A bishop has two jurisdictions, the paternal and the judicial, but his judicial functions are distinctly second to his paternal.'

There is no doubt that the paternal authority of the bishop is the one most likely to prove effective. It may also be said that the decrease in the administrative authority and powers of the episcopate, which only they themselves can accomplish, would lead to an increase of their paternal authority and prestige.

An increasing body of support is forthcoming from certain quarters for the revival of the diocesan synod as a permanent feature of the life of the diocese. The Upper House of the Canterbury Convocation resolved in 1922

> 'That it is desirable that in this Province diocesan synods of clergy should be summoned by diocesan bishops for the purpose of mutual consultation on matters concerning faith, worship, morals, discipline and the pastoral office.'

Little has been done to implement this resolution, and although the sacred synod has the merits of being an ancient instrument of church government the absence of the laity would be a serious departure from primitive practice. In these days of easy transport there is ample opportunity for frequent meetings of the bishop with the clergy in smaller groups than a diocesan synod. It is also doubtful whether the revival of synods as a form of church government would effectively bridge the gap between the bishops and the parochial clergy or achieve a new balance of power which, for many years, has drifted in the episcopal direction. Writing in favour of the revival of synods the Archbishop of York says :

> 'First it must be recognized that there is only one effective vote, and that is the vote of the diocesan bishop. This may seem to be a most undemocratic statement, but it is as well to be clear at the outset that the sacred synod consisting of the bishop and clergy meets only in an advisory capacity. It has no power to legislate or to administer. . . . The general mind of the clergy apart from the opinion of various groups in it is usually sound and wise. But when all this has been said the bishop has the first and last word.'

This clearly is no remedy for our present sickness. The Archbishop's second requirement for a successful synod looks at first sight more hopeful :

> 'Secondly,' he says, 'the discussion must be absolutely frank. The Bishop must give dissentients and minorities every opportunity of expressing their point of view. No one should fear that he might be regarded as disloyal if his opinions prove to be unpopular.'

But so generous and charitable an outlook will not always be maintained. A more realistic verdict on this aspect of synodical government was given by Doctor Rawlinson, the present Bishop of Derby, when he was Archdeacon of Auckland :

> 'It requires courage,' he writes, 'as well as thought-out conviction to oppose the policy of the bishop in synod; nor will it in all cases be easy in practice it is to be feared, for the clergy to exclude wholly from their minds the consideration that the Bishops control a great deal of diocesan patronage.'

The centralization and bureaucracy of which we have spoken is often associated with the Church Assembly. New institutions are seldom popular and the Assembly is no exception. In the twenty-seven years of its existence it has received more kicks than halfpence. A full measure of praise must be given to its not inconsiderable achievements, and for the notable contribution which it has made to the administrative reform of the Church of England. Without it many urgent and necessary changes would have been postponed by a Parliament with little or no time to spare for ecclesiastical legislation. Over sixty measures have received the Royal Assent, most of them dealing with administrative and financial problems. The disquiet which is felt about it arises from the unrepresentative character of the House of Clergy and still more of the House of Laity. 'Its membership,' said Dick Shepherd, 'resembles nothing so much as the House of Commons before the passing of the Reform Bill.' The House of Clergy is over-weighted with dignitaries and the House of Laity with those whom we dub, in uncharitable moments, the ecclesiastically minded laity. The significance of this for our present purpose is that the Assembly has failed to arrest the growth of bureaucracy and officialdom but has on the contrary promoted this expensive and authoritarian system of administration. In a notable sermon on the Church Assembly preached before the University of Cambridge in 1931, Professor Ratcliff uttered words which are worth recalling :

> 'Beneath the cover,' he said, 'of an apparently democratic institution the ecclesiastical authorities are pursuing a policy the reverse of democratic. Under the aegis of liberty liberties are being suppressed. What was to have been the megaphone of the church has become the microphone of its officials. What at the beginning was said to be only a change in the machinery of government is proving to be a change in the method of government. Whether or not the Assembly accepts the extreme interpretation of the bishop's function and office, the trend of its legislative

> effort is set in that direction, and its measures give effective expression to the theory. By means of its measures the Church Assembly is transforming the Church of England into a federation of petty monarchies.'

The Church Assembly as it is at present established is quite inadequate to sustain the Church of England as a national church. Many of its members, no doubt, are not concerned to maintain the national character of the Church. A bold and imaginative proposal for the creation of an entirely new House of Laity was made some years ago by the editor of the *Modern Churchman*. He ventured to suggest that all members of the House of Commons who claimed to be Churchmen should have the right to sit in the House of Laity together with as many lay peers, being Churchmen and elected by the House of Lords, as there are bishops in the Upper House of Parliament. Such a reform would ensure a body of representative and able laymen, but the increasing pressure of parliamentary business makes it doubtful whether Members of Parliament would welcome this desirable reform.

As matters stand to-day the Church is governed to all intents and purposes by clerics. It has failed to find an adequate rôle for the layman such as has been wisely afforded him in the Free Churches. The balance of power in the administration of the Church of England will not be adjusted until this failure is remedied. In the words of Richard Hooker:

> 'Were it so that the clergy alone might give laws unto all the rest, for as much as every estate doth desire to enlarge the bounds of their own liberties, is it not easy to see how injurious this might prove unto men of other condition? Peace and justice are maintained by preserving unto every order their rights, and by keeping all estates, as it were, in an even balance.'

II

If the evils of centralization and bureaucracy form one of the greatest administrative problems confronting the Church of England to-day, an equally grave sign of the times is the tendency and openly advocated policy of narrowing the bounds of the Church so that it may be more clearly divided from the nation. It is a policy of exclusiveness rather than of inclusiveness, of rigidity and uniformity rather than of charity and comprehensiveness. The advocates of such a policy seek, wittingly or unwittingly, what the late Canon Streeter once called 'a nice tidy smooth running little church' whose privileges and pastoral ministrations would be confined to those who fulfilled certain obligations. It is in the sphere of pastoral administration that this policy is most clearly seen. A group of zealous young priests in Hull recently published two broadsheets entitled 'The Church and Evangelism in England—

a practical proposal.' It is not easy to discern what is the practical proposal advocated though the authors leave the reader in no doubt of the direction in which they seek to drive the Church :

> 'The fact is,' they say, 'that the traditional pastoral methods and the general policy of the church are useless and dangerous in the present completely new situation . . . Membership of the church must be seen as a privilege which carries with it responsibilities and the obligations of membership must be defined and asserted more clearly, so that the majority of churchgoers may either come further in or go further out.'

In calling upon the Bishops, the Convocations and the Church Assembly to take the initiative this ardent but misguided body of Montanists say 'the parish priest is powerless to take any direct action to bring about reform in his own parish.' We wish, indeed, that this were so.

Akin in spirit, in purpose and in temper with this development in Hull is the Baptismal Reform Movement which is now an organized body. A recent conference in Bristol attended by representatives of the dioceses in the south-west made the following recommendations :

> 'That parish priests agree to baptize only the children of parishioners or those whose names are on the Electoral Roll. Other children may be baptized only if their parents bring written consent from the priest in whose parish they reside, except in case of danger of death. That all parents be required to sign a written promise that the child will be brought up in the faith and practice of the Church of England and will not be entrusted to any religious body not in communion with her. That baptism be deferred when proposition 2 is not acceptable to the parents in order that instruction may be given.'

Of this movement that is now rapidly spreading and engaging in widespread propaganda it might be said that the additional forms which it seeks to inflict upon English people are not likely to promote its popularity with them in these days. It would seem as though our future ordinands ought to be trained in the use of filing cabinets as an essential part of their preparation for the pastoral ministry. Those of us who have little taste and still less ability for office routine will cut a sorry figure at episcopal visitations of the future if this policy should ever succeed. It can only result in the loss of pastoral contacts and opportunities for inestimable good which the traditional pastoral methods of the English Church preserve.

But perhaps the most serious and far-reaching proposal which has recently emanated from this policy of narrowing the bounds of the Church of England is contained in a pamphlet by A. T. Macmillan entitled 'Marriage, Divorce and the Church.' Briefly, this pamphlet advocates amendments of the law of marriage so as to authorize the Church to require, as a condition of celebrating any

marriage in church, that the parties to the marriage sign a declaration stating :

> (1) That they fully understand that, according to the church's teaching, a Christian marriage is the indissoluble union for life of one man with one woman to the exclusion of all others.
>
> (2) That they intend their marriage to be such a union, indissoluble during their joint lives.

According to this plan the Matrimonial Causes Act should be amended so that 'No marriage to which such a declaration has been made shall be dissolved by a decree of the Court.' Further enabling legislation is proposed giving the Church either

> (1) Complete right to decide between what persons and under what conditions she celebrates marriage or (if this be too wide for any chance, of success)
>
> (2) Power to impose as to conditions to marrying persons.
>
> (*a*) That both be baptized and confirmed and practising members.
>
> (*b*) That both be properly instructed to the satisfaction of the officiating (or other) priest or of the Bishop.

The plan also contains proposals for the establishment of a Church Court in matrimonial causes, and the author naïvely opines : 'I think the Court would have to act with great leniency during the first few years of its existence to adopt a really maximizing policy in granting declarations of nullity.'

These puerile proposals, which happily have little chance of being passed into law, are cited here as an instance of the lengths to which some Churchmen are prepared to go in their efforts to tighten the administration of the Church in the pastoral sphere.

There is clearly revealed in the present situation a conflict of ideals within the Church of England as to what its purpose and mission should be. There are those who advocate a rigidity of discipline which in history and in practice has only been made tolerable and possible by wholesale indulgences and dispensations. It is the way of a hard law with a big back door of escape. It is a system abhorrent to the English people who still believe that the Reformation saved them from it and who have no desire to return to it. In their perfectionist zeal sincere upholders of this policy of administrative reform are attempting to impose a narrow, rigid, exclusive and uniform administrative pattern that is alien to the genius of the English Church, stultifying to the rank and file of the parochial clergy, and resented by the vast majority of the laity. We can sympathize with those who feel that in the present religious situation of the country an undeclared state of war exists between the Church and the nation at large, a situation which calls for martial methods of Church government. So much ground has been lost; almost every vestige of the discipline of the laity has

disappeared. The Church, they would say, is at variance with the world and the world's assumptions, and the sooner this is recognized the better.

We doubt, however, whether these pastoral methods will achieve any success or solve the problem of the relation of the Church of England to the people of England. The way of revival, we believe, is not the abandonment of the Church's historic mission as the centre of the religious life of the nation, but the recovery of this ideal. It is the privilege as well as the opportunity which the Church of England enjoys in a peculiar measure that it has responsibility for the care of those who lie outside all congregations. Its distinctive mission is the 'Apostolate of the Indevout.' The reform really needed, as Arnold said a century ago, 'is to make the Church truly and effectually the Church of England.' This will not be achieved by a Church which deliberately abandons its historic mission. Those who advocate such a course betray an ignorance of the dormant but none the less real regard and affection which the majority of English people feel for their Church; an affection which will never be stirred into active Church membership by high-handed and autocratic pastoral administration. The Bishop of Southwell has clearly stated the two policies which are now before the Church:

> 'By way of illustrating the two alternatives, it is not hard to think of two dioceses in different parts of the Anglican communion. In one, our church has taken its stand stiffly on the strictest formularies of churchmanship. Its membership consists of the clergy and a small inner circle of the devout, while the great mass of the laity are outside. In the other, it is functioning as the conscience of the whole English-speaking community, and supplying the leadership and inspiration of all its moral and religious ideals. The official policy of the latter diocese would be censured in the former as laxity. But which of the two has understood best the true and authentic Anglican tradition?
>
> The Church of England has never been a sect. When most vital and most true to itself it has been the soul and conscience of the nation; it may be claimed that the present moment, after years of comparative eclipse, it has regained the chance to discharge this function. Its spokesmen are once more the acknowledged leaders of Christian opinion in matters of public policy.
>
> It may be still deplorably out of touch with the great majority of the population. But it has before it an opportunity greater than any that has yet been offered to us. In the bankruptcy of secular leadership our people are willing, are even eager, to accept a strong lead from their church. It need give but a few generous gestures and the people of England will be with it. But if Anglicanism fails the world now, it is no other form of Christianity which will win its allegiance, but paganism.'

Few English Churchmen have grasped so clearly or expressed so forcibly the true nature and mission of the English Church as did Bishop Creighton:

> 'Unwise attempts,' he says, 'to revive ecclesiastical discipline on arbitrary lines have led to a fear lest a new type of character should be produced, lacking in that robustness which Englishmen rightly prize. This is a point which more than any other comes home to every Englishman's heart. He cannot sympathize with punctiliousness about trifles, with excessive scrupulosity, with practices which rest on authority and not on the reason of the thing. This, I think, is at the bottom of his dread of sacerdotalism. He will not endure an ecclesiastical system which pursues small objects of its own apart from their connection with the great stream of national life.'

Creighton's historical learning and his understanding of human character enabled him to see the dangers which always beset institutional religion:

> 'The danger to which all institutions are exposed is that they are founded for the good of men, but as they become powerful they tend to exist primarily for their own good. Ease of organization, order and regularity are what every institution inevitably aims at. It insensibly demands that men should take the form in which they can most easily be organized and dealt with. This is the danger which has always beset the Western Church. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the history of that church is a series of struggles to keep it a humane institution.'

It might indeed fall to us and to all Liberal Churchmen in the future to take up the cudgels to keep the Church of England 'a humane institution,' to preserve a reputation recently claimed for it by the Archbishop of York. 'It is to-day,' he says, 'the most liberal minded Church in the world; perhaps we might dare to say it is the most charitable of all Churches.' As we discern the tendencies at work in the life of the Church of England to-day it is not, we believe, too alarming to say that her charity no less than her liberalism is at stake.

That is the conflict for which we must prepare. In the last resort we engage in it not because we are led thereto by considerations of history, not because our estimate of the national character dictates such a course, not because by nature we are liberal in temper and tolerant in judgement, but because we believe we are impelled by obedience to the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ. 'And He came forth and saw a great multitude and He had compassion on them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd.' It is only as we learn His compassion that we shall do His will.

CHURCH FINANCE, ETC.

By G. F. Townley, Archdeacon of York

THIS Conference has already discussed problems of belief and Divine Providence, and other great matters, and now we come down to a level, suited to my archidiaconal capacity, of Church Finance and Parochial Organization, and you will forgive me if I speak on a personal note from my experience as a parish priest for twenty-five years in large parishes. But as the Church of England is to most people the church in their particular parish, the state of the parishes is of vital importance, for there is exhibited our strength and our weakness. The parish clergy are the men in the Church's front line. How are they faring? The situation, as I see it, is rather patchy, or like the curate's egg, 'good in parts.' We hear of empty churches, but I know of a great many well attended and some crowded ones, and the quick and generous response to diocesan appeals is proof of the virile life and of goodwill in many parishes. The York Diocese, which raised over £100,000 in its appeal in 1933-38, appealed again in 1945 for £176,000 in three years, and in the first year produced £99,000. This was raised to £140,000 at the end of the second year, and more than one-third of the parishes had reached their targets, with many others certain to do so. Meanwhile some are obviously finding it difficult; in finance, as in other things, the situation is 'patchy.' Much has been said and written about the general decline in organized religion during the past years, and none would pretend that the Church is as strong as it was fifty or even twenty-five years ago. It is necessary to know the reasons for this decline, but I feel it would also be useful to discover why the Church still flourishes in so many parishes even in these times.

Generally speaking, where clergymen are keen and happy in their work, and co-operative with their people, there is a ready response. One who serves God and loves his people cannot fail. On the other hand there are clergy who seem to have lost heart, often through age or infirmity, or being left too long in lonely or difficult parishes. Many have had a grim fight with poverty, or a vast house with a wilderness which once was a garden. Some, it must be confessed, seem to be misfits. And the bishops, with all

the goodwill in the world, have been unable to facilitate the movement which seems so obviously the remedy to those unaware of the complications of patronage, churchmanship, size of family, age or capacities of those involved. Ten years ago the publication of *Men, Money and the Ministry* started a spate of literature on this subject, and the rise in cost of living and the very serious decline of income from tithe and investments have made it a matter of immediate concern for clergy and administrators. Much has in fact been done by the dioceses and central authorities towards alleviating hardships and in the way of reform, and the latest Church Assembly measure on 'Pastoral Reorganization' is a big step forward. Some clergy may be perturbed at the threat to 'parson's freehold,' but the vast majority are relieved to know that practical measures are being taken, and the laity are taking an increasing interest and are undoubtedly ready to further any sound schemes. Where meetings of laymen are held, refreshing keenness is revealed. The fact is being realized that the social and economic revolution has affected the Church as well as every other department of life in our country. The 'good old days' have gone for good. Wingfield-Stratford in his charming book *Before the Lamps Went Out* describes the passing of a gracious epoch.

Most of us have memories of the pleasant conditions of clerical life of those pre-1914 years. It was a good time for the parson and for the Church. Every village was a well-knit community and the church central in it. There was not only 'a gentleman in every parish' but a cultured home with a fine example of family life, with genuinely good, pious leaders who cared for their people in every way. No wonder, when the union of benefices is proposed, there is an outcry and a demand for their own parson, and always on the same old terms. But the man they want is rarely to be found. Bishop Creighton, in his Primary Charge in 1894 to the Peterborough Diocese, expresses his concern at the sad depreciation of clerical incomes due to agricultural depression. The good bishop even started a fund to help the clergy, and was then very surprised at the meagre response. The fact was that the clergy did not welcome, nor did they need, this charity. He said:

> 'I can only infer that the clergy as a body are unwilling to plead exceptional poverty. I know that his clerical income rarely forms the entire maintenance of the clergyman, who generally gives his services without question of exact remuneration. Men can afford to go to ill-paid parishes. Curates have voluntarily waived their stipends. Men labour on, and ask for no recognition for work which is to a large extent voluntary.'

This illustrates the complete change that has taken place. The amateur has gone, to be replaced by the professional. Just as in

cricket! A county would take the field with four or even fewer professionals and the rest gentlemen. An irate supporter of a midland county once said, when Yorkshire arrived with ten professionals, 'If I were captain I would refuse to take the field.' To-day a county captain may himself be a 'pro.'

The clergy, however, will never become professional in the sense of demanding the highest income possible for their services, and their patient endurance of poverty during the war years, when all others were getting increases and bonus, is testimony that the spirit of the present-day parson is worthy of the best tradition. A parson must be prepared to 'toil and not to ask for reward,' yet it is necessary to give a man a sufficient stipend to enable him to work at his best without undue worry, and to provide for his family. This means the Church must raise more money for clergy maintenance, for few clergymen to-day have private means. Our Church has in the past been pauperized. It has had the services of its clergy free of charge, due to the endowments of their forefathers and the kind offices of a voluntary clergy. Moreover, the clergy not only gave their services, they gave their money too in many cases. I know of parishes where collections were only taken at the monthly Holy Communion, or for the local hospital. The rector paid all church expenses. It is a good thing really that religion is now going to cost something. For in my experience the healthy parish is one that has always had to raise all or most of its expenses. Where there have been benefactors, ancient or modern, the tendency is for the people to take this as normal and to do little for themselves or their neighbours. Now that the accumulated assets of our Church have declined, and costs have gone up, more will have to be provided for our current income and all Churchpeople will have to face up to their responsibilities. The Roman Catholics, Free Churches, and our own Communion outside England have to maintain their work and to support their ministry; now our people must do the same.

It is unfortunate that this demand upon the parishes should come at a time when other heavy calls are being made on their resources. Appeals are many and varied. Every good cause presumes on the support of the Churches. Sometimes this is, in effect, asking Churchpeople to give double, as they will already have contributed as members of the public. Diocesan and Central Church quotas have to be paid, and these are a comparatively recent imposition. More parishes are coming to regard the support of Overseas Missions to be of paramount importance, and to aim at a guaranteed sum annually. And these payments to the work of the Church in the diocese and beyond should be a first charge on

the parish. Then there are the parishes committed to big schemes for building new churches, or halls, or possibly bringing day schools up to the required standard. Another liability I see looming ahead in a great number of parishes is the restoration or extensive repairs to the parish church. Most of our churches were restored last when the squire or wealthy parishioners were interested. In many cases there are now no such wealthy people available. The dioceses are all making their appeals for very large sums of money, and some of the objects I have mentioned are included, but by no means all, nor could all the varied needs be covered by a diocesan appeal. Many parishes, when in any trouble, look pathetically to the Diocese or Queen Anne's Bounty or the Commissioners for help as though there existed somewhere a fairy godmother. But the Church in the future will have to rely more on current income, and that means the parishes must produce the money for the Church's work and not depend on endowments.

In view of all these bewildering calls upon the parishes, and most of them new calls, it is no wonder that it comes as a shock to learn that the incumbent himself has become a charge on the parish, instead of being, as in the Victorian era, its chief supporter. I have said that the really strong parishes are those which have had to do a good deal for themselves. For more than twenty years of my twenty-five in the ministry I have served in parishes with four or five churches. When a large staff has to be maintained, and in some parishes a good deal of the vicar's stipend also, conditions are similar to those in non-Anglican Churches or our Church overseas, and this is in my opinion good for both parson and people. I agree with the editor of *The Modern Churchman* who wrote of this in the April number. He stated that

> 'If the ministrations and services of the clergy were valued by the majority of their parishioners there would be no difficulty in securing for such clergymen adequate stipends.'

I can bear that out. One wise layman has suggested that the proportion should be three-quarters from endowment and one-quarter from current income. Less than half of my stipend comes from endowment, and the parish has also to raise two-thirds of the stipends of three curates. Yet this same parish can still do more than most for the diocese and missions and all sorts of charities. I know of many parishes of varying types where the same ready response is forthcoming. And to-day more money is in the hands of the weekly wage-earners, who can be most generous when the needs are put before them. The copper is turning into silver, even in Sunday schools, where little girls can fumble in their purses for the right coin. One parish which formerly counted £2 in copper

out of £8 in a Sunday evening collection has now only 10/- in copper and an increased collection. The nimble sixpence has displaced the work of 'Alexander the coppersmith,' who has most certainly done much evil in our Church of England; and copper is now turning into silver in the collection bags.

The problems of finance are closely related to those of man-power and organization. A few years ago over 17,000 clergy were employed in nearly 13,000 parishes. To-day there are approximately 15,000 clergy in active work and the number of parishes has also been reduced to 11,280. We must soon face up to a big issue. Are we to be content with fewer clergy, because we can only afford say 15,000 with our declining revenue and higher rate of pay? Or ought we to increase the number of clergy to staff all the parishes as heretofore? Personally I feel that we can manage with fewer clergymen, for no one can contend that the incumbents in more than 4,000 parishes of under 500 population were fully occupied. Some of these parishes were very small, and men have stayed many years with 50 or 100 people while their brethren in large towns toiled single-handed with ten or even twenty thousand souls. Redistribution of available man-power is inevitable. We are aware that some country parishes cover a vast area, and these must be provided for. It is also for the good of the Church that some small parishes are retained as easily worked units for special reasons; for instance, where a scholar, or a man needing to recuperate or one doing diocesan work, would live and work. The over-ruling principle should be to give to every man a worth-while and satisfying sphere of work, and a stipend large enough to enable him to work without undue anxiety, and with it a house suitable under modern conditions.

Fewer clergy may suffice in the future for another reason. There are not the same calls made upon us. In the thirteenth century it is said that there were 40,000 secular clergy in 9,500 parishes, besides the 17,000 monks and friars. Dr. Coulton estimated that two per cent. of the population were clerics. This is startling when contrasted with our 15,000 to 37 millions, or one cleric to 2,466 people, or, counting ministers of all the churches, perhaps one to 1,233. But in mediaeval times the clergy did much more than is expected of us. They were the only clerks, and a vast amount of work of administration, law, teaching, and so forth is now taken over by other professions. And to-day many other agencies take up much of the social and other work which was once left to the parson in both village and town parishes.

In comparing our situation to-day with mediaeval conditions it is of great interest to note that there were then four or five men to

each parish, most of them in minor orders, with perhaps only one or two priests, but the area they served was often very large and contained several chapelries and places of worship. It was a much later development, and indeed only in the last century in the North of England, have these chapelries been made into separate parishes. Originally they were more like some of our experimental groupings to-day.

This raises an important question. How large ought a parish to be? And which is better, the large parish with a staff or a single-church parish served by one man? I must say that the people prefer their own parson, and the most satisfying sphere for the pastoral-minded clergyman is where he can know and be known by all his people. Where there are curates or lay-workers it is still the vicar who is the *persona*, and it is his visit or ministrations which they prefer. It may be a pity but it is true. A village unit of from 500 to 1,000 people, if not too scattered, or a town parish of 2,000 to 4,000 people where good lay help can be secured, could be worked by one man. In scattered country areas a number of churches may be better served by a team of clergymen, thus reducing the loneliness in remote places, if these are mobile and are a real team. Then there are great town parishes also where a team of clergy is necessary owing to the density of population or a number of churches to be served. Middlesbrough, a typical mushroom deanery, was served by 21 vicars with 30 or more curates, several of the parishes being very large. With a good team, not always easy to secure, these parishes had a strength and virility which was impressive to any visitor. In that deanery to-day there are only 11 curates, that is, 32 clergy in all, to nearly 200,000 people, one to 6,250. In Hull there are to-day 45 clergy to 300,000 people, or one to 6,666. And in Scarborough, an attractive place for curates and flourishing as a holiday resort, only one clergyman to 2,842 people, 14 men to 40,000 people — that is excluding the summer visitors. In the York Archdeaconry, with its preponderant country population, there are 141 clergy working 161 parishes, or one to 1,423 people. As there are 210 churches in the Archdeaconry, this means that two men are on the average serving three churches. All this means that our man-power is dangerously depleted, and with sickness or other contingencies becomes unequal to its task if services are to be held regularly and the work maintained in all the parishes. If all our clergy were employed on a rational basis, and units were equalized, it would not be so bad. But the Church of England is not like the Army or a Government department; it cannot be easily reorganized, and its clergy are not all of one age, type or capacity to be moved about

like pawns, and so there is no speedy, simple, drastic remedy. We can and ought to frame a policy and be working to a plan, using all the existing machinery for reform and introducing any new measures necessary to expedite plans. We shall, I trust, still have varied types of parochial units. The parish is the unit in our Church, and our people will not want what would resemble Methodist Circuits as the normal unit, and most clergy would sooner work, when experienced, as incumbents. We have had in the past three incumbents to one curate. To change over to a system which only needed nine thousand incumbents and six or seven thousand curates will not be popular with the clergy or the laity. As I have said, in certain big town parishes the team of clergy is desirable and necessary, and it may be possible in certain groupings of churches in the country, but nearly all curates get what I call 'vicaritis' sooner or later, that is, a strong desire to be working in parishes of their own. The man content to be a curate for life is rare, and if the grouping of parishes is extended the staffing of them will not be easy, unless a new type of cleric, men who desire to work in town or country parishes or in some kind of order or brotherhood, is evolved. As I pointed out, this was the system in the thirteenth century, but we have had a very different method for a long time.

Where it is possible in the country I think that two adjacent small parishes can be worked by one man. With more than two churches the strain is too great. If the country parishes are made into spheres of work which give men full scope, more young men will be ready to work in the country and find satisfaction. Unless we are able to recruit very large numbers of ordinands, and then be able to pay them, I can see no hope for the one parson, one village, being a possibility again, even if this were desirable. Much that was once left to the parson is now being done through lay agencies, although there is still abundant scope for the leadership, influence and active co-operation of the clergyman both in town and country in all spheres of life. Our functions are fundamentally those of spiritual leadership and moral guidance, and with goodwill, humility and tact the parson can still play a great part in the life of the community. In education, in youth work and cultural life, and in recreation our interest and help is welcome and can be influential. We want as many clergy as we can get, and the supply always meets the demand when the need is vital and is understood. Meanwhile we must use all our resources of man-power and money to the best advantage. We must use our splendid lay workers both in church and in the parish more than we have done. We are depending more upon this help. Without the devoted

work of lay readers many churches could have no regular Sunday services; without the thousands of Sunday school teachers we could not cope with our children, and the plight of town parishes would be infinitely worse; and yet still greater use can be made of lay help in all departments of Church life. The new powers coming from new legislation must be used with discretion and patience and tact. But above all we must rekindle faith and create goodwill and confidence, and then some of our practical difficulties will begin to be solved.

IMAGINATION IN RELIGION

By the Rev. F. W. Moyle, M.A., Rector of Allesley.

'Only we must let our steps be guided by such Truth as we have attained.'
—*Phil.* iii, 16.
Moffatt's translation of Πλὴν εἰς ὃ ἐφθάσαμεν, τῷ αὐτῷ στοιχεῖν.

'SUCH Truth.' No man in any age can rightly claim more than that. The Christian man is like St. Paul, who makes the most of what he has, provided that he never claims to have the whole. I was buttonholed one night, after a meeting which I had been addressing, by four men. One was a Fundamentalist, another was a Roman Catholic, the third a Spiritualist, and the fourth claimed finality for the teachings of Madame Blavatski. It was a bitter night, but these fellows got hotter and hotter, not with me, but with one another. In the early hours of the next morning, as I made my escape, I was permitted to say, 'Gentlemen, I think we have made one important discovery to-night; there is no such thing as infallibility, though while you were each talking I should have taken it that there were four.'

We must be guided by such truth as we have attained. It is possible to fail in this in the opposite direction. While he who claims to have the whole truth is apt to wax too hot, truth itself may suffer if we are too cold and academic and show too little enthusiasm about such as we have. The human race has suffered many things because men have claimed too much or claimed too little for that facet of truth which has been revealed to them.

How do we apprehend Truth?

But how do we apprehend truth? Perhaps that may be thought an impertinent question to raise in the closing address of a conference, or in fact at all! I only raise it because it seems to me that

there is a distinctively Christian element in our epistemology which is very easily missed. I think we all recognize our need of this element whenever we set about the difficult task of trying to convince the average man or woman to whom we are commissioned to give such as we have that there is so much more truth for us to live by than that which is contained in fact and happening.

Somehow or other, Truth seems to have got locked up inside the four walls of a prison house of hard concrete fact. To the ordinary Englishman, the question 'Is it true?' might just as well be phrased 'Did it happen?'; and further, 'Did it happen in the way in which it is reported to have happened?' 'Is the Bible true?' 'Are the Creeds true?' These questions are invariably taken to mean, 'Did the facts recorded really occur and did they occur in the particular manner in which they are reported? If not, then they are not true.' Our spiritual gold and our intellectual silver may be of little value here. We must seek a new currency, a new sort of small change, a new technique. Have we a technique for meeting this difficulty? That depends surely upon our own way of apprehending truth. St. Paul says that there is a distinctively Christian element in the apprehension of truth which belongs neither to the eye nor to the ear nor even to the 'heart' (by which I think he meant the reason or the mind), but which he says is revealed to us by the Spirit. Frederick Robertson of Brighton, in his classic sermon on that text, suggests what that receptive element in us is. He calls it 'the power of imagining and the power of loving.'

> 'It is a grand thing,' says Robertson, 'when in the stillness of the soul thought bursts into flame and the intuitive vision comes like an inspiration; when breathing thoughts clothe themselves in burning words, winged as it were with lightning—or when a great law of the Universe reveals itself to the mind of genius, and where all was darkness, his single word bids light be, and all is order where chaos and darkness were.'

Our use of the Imaginative Faculty.

But we must never suggest that the power of imagining is the monopoly of genius. Those who have had more than an average endowment of it have acclaimed it as the true light which lighteneth *every* man that cometh into the world. 'Would to God,' cried Moses when he was informed that Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp, 'would to God that *all* the Lord's people were prophets.' (*Exodus.*) 'It shall come to pass,' sings a later prophet, 'that I will pour out my spirit upon *all* flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy . . . and upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days I will pour out my spirit.' (*Joel.*) This is for all Christian men and women to claim, as Peter claimed it

on the day of Pentecost, not as a monopoly for oneself, for that, as Bishop Butler said to John Wesley, 'is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing,' but as a possession, a distinctively Christian possession for all Christian people.

This word Imagination is one sorely in need of redemption. Reason has her acknowledged validity. Will has something more than her share of recognition, but Imagination, which was peculiarly the gift of the Son of Man, if like the Son of Man, 'who hath not where to lay his head.' In fact the Reason and the Will have treated Imagination rather as her two sisters treated Cinderella. She is as one despised and rejected of men. Yet, like Cinderella, Imagination does the chores of our mental house. She lights the fires and cleans the windows of the mind. She is really the most practical member of the household, and, don't forget, she is the heroine of the immortal story, and the prince whom she knew in her dream palace turned out in the end to be a real prince who came and sought her. 'And the Prince married her and they lived happy all their days.' No doubt that is why Shelley says that poetry is the record of the happiest and best moments of the happiest and best minds.

But we are strangely inconsistent in our treatment of the Imagination. At one moment we treat it rather like a child's balloon, as Max Plowman says, pretty and harmless enough so long as it is firmly anchored to the stout cable of commonsense; at the next we appeal for a more diligent exercise of it. 'For God's sake use a little imagination.' I would echo that appeal as loudly as I can, for God is Truth. For truth's sake, let us use the imagination.

I am tempted to speak to you of nothing else, because I feel that the character and bearing of the Christian man is so impoverished a thing without it, and because I believe with Frederick Robertson that it is linked up with the power of loving — inextricably linked, that is to say, with the greatest thing in the world, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before God. Was it not a loving imagination which chiefly characterized the Master himself? None believed more than Jesus or trusted more than He in the power of rationality. So much so that, as Oliver Quick said,

> 'Jesus deliberately preferred to wait for men to see the truth by the light of their own reason, rather than force it upon them prematurely by inducing in them the uncritical acceptance of anything He might choose to say.' (*The Christian Sacraments*, p. 74.)

But none showed more clearly than Jesus that humble obedience to *every* word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And it was this which made Him value and commend a man, like the

Roman army captain, who showed his belief in the winged power of a creative prayer and the effective action of spiritual forces which work beyond the scope of the five senses. He called it 'faith,' but I think that for us, recognizing the dire misuses of that word, creative imagination is to be preferred.

Christ's Men and Women.

It is evident to anyone who tries to get behind the veil of familiarity and the maze of interpretation which obscures the parables that the characters which are commended to us there are men and women of Imagination. The father in the Prodigal Son story used it to understand both his sons; the Good Samaritan used it to deal with the wounded traveller; the disappointed Host used it to fill his empty guest chamber; those who are to enter into eternal life had used it to see the Son of Man in the hungry, the lowliest and the lost; even the swindling steward, an otherwise despicable creature, used it, admittedly for his own ends, but *used* it, said Jesus, more effectively than those who thought themselves enlightened persons. And how much true and loving imagination did Jesus himself bring to bear upon the literature of the Old Testament, when he winnowed out the wheat of the prophets from the chaff of scribal legalism, and found His own ideal of a suffering Messiahship like a treasure hid in a field strewn with garments rolled in blood and trodden by the iron heel of the spurred and booted warrior of popular Nationalistic Messianism.

Wordsworth's Peter Bell is as far from true Christian character as Peter Pan, the boy who couldn't grow up. For as to all the kindred of Peter Bell a primrose by the river's brim is nothing more than a yellow flower, so to all his learned and intellectual as well as to his ignorant and feeble-minded relations it must remain 'mere imagination,' or 'pure subjectivity,' and nothing more. The said Peter is evidently no relation of Dr. MacNeile Dixon, who addressed his learned audience in his third Gifford Lecture as follows:

> 'If I were asked what had been the most powerful force in the making of history, you would probably adjudge me of unbalanced mind were I to answer, as I should have to answer, Metaphor, figurative expression. It is by imagination that men have lived, imagination rules all our lives. The human mind is not, as philosophers would have you think, a debating hall, but a picture gallery.'

Truth for Our Age.

Our Christian man, then, is one who like the Pharaoh Akhnaton of the eighteenth Egyptian dynasty knows that he is 'living in Truth.' For truth is like the ocean; you cannot see the whole of

it, nor live in the whole of it, but that much of it which you bathe in is *part* of the ocean, and he who daily trusts himself to its waters shall rest and be renewed for service. But modern man tends to hug the shore, that shore which is strewn with the wrecks of two major wars, and his heart is full of fear and for looking at those things which have come upon the earth and threaten still to come. He is most frightened of all as he looks at this new thing which the tide of Time has brought in, this atomic energy, which, like all other elemental forces, is neither good nor evil till a good or an evil will handles it. And which is it going to be?

'When these things begin to come to pass,' cried Jesus, as He looked down the long strand of time and heard the sea and the waves roaring and saw men's hearts failing them for fear, 'When these things begin to come to pass . . .' then—what? 'Lift up your heads; yes, lift up your heads, not in pride but in hope.'

God can do nothing with human pride except to bring it low, as He has brought low the shallow pride and complacent optimism of nineteenth-century materialism and the idol of automatic progress which is now in the dust. But God can do much with human hope and human trust and human imagination. As our own poet-prophet, John Masefield, writing of Shakespeare, has put it, 'Man's body is faulty, his mind untrustworthy, but his imagination has made him remarkable.' It certainly has. When our ancestors of the Renaissance were confronted with two major discoveries, the new astronomy of Copernicus and the new geography of Columbus, added to which was the re-discovery of an ancient culture which came to be called the New Learning, their hearts did not fail them for fear because they felt that somehow they were in the hand of God, and they promptly improved two instruments already in their hands, lenses for telescopes and microscopes, the rudimentary mariner's compass known in some form to the Vikings, and they also invented a brand new thing, the printing press. The imagination which went to the fashioning of these things made our spiritual ancestors remarkable indeed.

What shall we look for? Not the invention of new instruments—that can be left to the scientists to evolve—but the discovery, or rather the realization, not that we are in the hand of God, though that is true, but that God is in *our* hands, in *our* brains, in *our* hearts, in *our* imagination, in *our* human nature itself. Christianity is a gospel, good news about God, but it is also good news about man made in the image of God. 'Jesus believed in man more than man has ever believed in himself, or in Christ.' That is a true saying, and one to be shouted from the housetops at the present time. The difference between Jesus and ourselves is not a differ-

ence in kind but a difference in degree. He grew, progressed, developed ('increased' is the word used by St. Luke) in wisdom. What is this wisdom? 'Wisdom,' Jesus must surely have read and believed, 'is a spirit that loveth Man,' a spirit 'more mobile than any motion, that penetrateth all things by reason of her pureness, and from generation to generation, passing into holy souls, maketh men friends of God and prophets.' (*Wisdom* vii.) The difference between Jesus and ourselves is, I repeat, a difference of the degree of realization of this truth about man's inspiration and man's potential Divine Sonship. Jesus, as the unknown writer '*To the Hebrews*' calls Him, is the 'pioneer' of our faith, who 'being made in all things like unto his brethren' has faced beforehand all the hardships and overcome all the difficulties of that new way of life for every man who comes to believe that he also is a son of the Most High. We are born in unconsciousness; we awake to self-consciousness; we grow or increase in God-consciousness. Jesus was the pioneer of that. He was the first, we believe, to grow into a full consciousness of God's indwelling. That is His present uniqueness (or, more technically, only begottenness). 'To as many as receive Him, He gives power (ἐξουσια) to become Sons of God.' Notice that word ἐξουσια ; it really means 'freedom of action' or 'the right to act.'

So we have Christ's authority for thinking thus highly of Man. Those who at the present time are trying to revive some doctrine of the total depravity of man, and glow with what they think to be evangelical fervour as they speak of man as 'a fallen creature,' cannot claim the authority of Christ. They are only trying to save the face of a scheme or theory of redemption which is quite unredeemable in the light of human freedom. As Dr. Urquhart puts it:

> 'With the intention of Barth and Brünner and their desire to emphasize the graciousness of God there can be no controversy, but surely their idea of the utter incapacity of man's spirit and their mechanical substitution of the Holy Spirit for the spirit of man should not be pressed to such an extent as to imply that human beings are mere empty receptacles of the Divine Mercy.' (*Humanism and Christianity*, p. 156.)

We can only believe that those who are thus preaching a defeatist doctrine about man are doing so because of what they have seen or suffered at the hand of man. We are commissioned to commend the Christian good news about the potential divinity of man, and we have to do that even in the face of what we did to Christ at Calvary. Let all the despisers and disparagers of man remember that is was *after* what we did at Calvary that the Spirit of Jesus was breathed upon us, and His word of commission given to us,

'as my Father hath sent me even so I send you.' The Cross did not destroy Christ's faith in man. It deepened it.

We believe that the powers which were available to Jesus are available also to us—the power to become Sons of God, the power to forgive, the power to be generous with what we have so freely received, the power to love our enemies and do good to them that despitefully use us, the power to pray as He prayed, and as a result the power to heal the spirits, minds, and bodies of men and women as He did.

'The wind,' He said, 'bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. So is everyone that is born of the Spirit.' (*Jn.* iii.)

He who is thus born into Christ's awareness or consciousness of the Spirit is as unaccountable as the wind, but, like the wind, his mighty works will be in harmony and not out of harmony with the laws of a universe ordered by the eternal wisdom. He who is thus born into Christ's consciousness of the Spirit will see God controlling history, guiding history, making history, not with the mighty hand and the outstretched arm of an inscrutable transcendent omnipotence, but with the wounded hand of Jesus, and, in so far as he is willing to be a partaker in Christ's sufferings, he will rejoice that in his little measure God may also use his own wounded hand or sorrowful heart, if his sorrow has made him compassionate and has been allowed to deepen his love.*

He who is thus reborn, as Jesus was when to Him the heavens were open and the consciousness of the Divine indwelling became a voice within His soul, will conquer man's worst enemy, which is Fear. Like his Master, he will calm and still, not the raging elements around him, but the far more dangerous demon of fear that lurks within himself and others. Like his Master, he will see God, not in the 'comet's rush,' but in the 'rose's birth'; not in the nine days' wonder, but in the wonder of each new day. He will not turn defeatist, because he will know that the Kingdom of God is not an affair of State to be ushered in with a fanfare of national or political trumpets, but a state of affairs within his own heart, whence God can extend and whence God can commend His Fatherly rule.

This is the good news for the atomic age. Man God-indwelt, the realization of the divine power within man which shall be able to control the newly revealed energy within matter. This is a true Christian humanism. I use the adjective Christian, as Streeter

* The reference behind this is to Moffatt's translation of *II Cor.* vii, 10 (ἡ γαρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη), 'the pain God is allowed to guide.'

used to say, emphatically, yet without intent to weaken the noun Humanism.

Thus the Gospel story and the Truth it contains is much more than a fact of past history. It can become a present experience in the Christian man who makes his life 'an affirmation and an act that bids eternal truth be present fact.'

But what is truth? I believe that the author of the Fourth Gospel was writing something more than history when he put that question into the mouth of Pontius Pilate in his dramatic presentation of the trial of our Lord. Is not the Evangelist saying to the ages, 'Do you not see that every time you shirk the question "What is truth," you are dismissing Christ as Pilate did with a shrug of the shoulders. How often we children of time, immersed in our worldly business and blinded by our passion for securing immediate results for our short-term policies—how often we forget that we are also pilgrims of eternity! Generation after generation and day after day we shut our eyes to the light of new truth which is waiting to stream in upon us from the eternal world. Remember that the immediate result which Pilate secured was the crucifixion of the Hope of the World. But who can begin to estimate what the result may be when you or I make our own the thought by which that same writer interprets the Mind of the Incarnate Word: 'To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth'?

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